

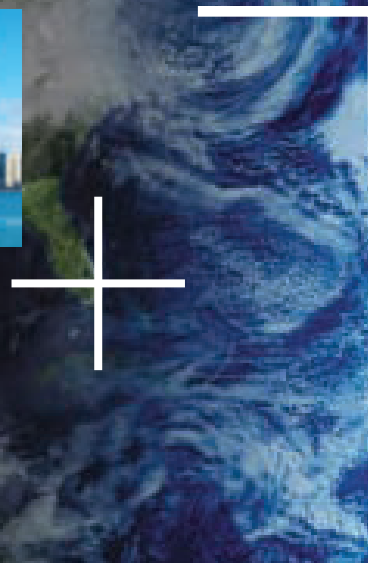
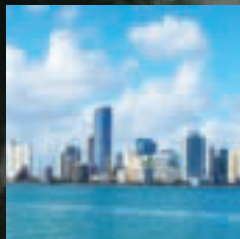


TexasArchitect

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JAZZ AT THE PAVILION
RdIR Architects w/ Horst Berger
W.O. NEUHAUS III, FAIA



REPRISE OF A CLASSIC
Stern and Bucek Architects
ANNA MOD

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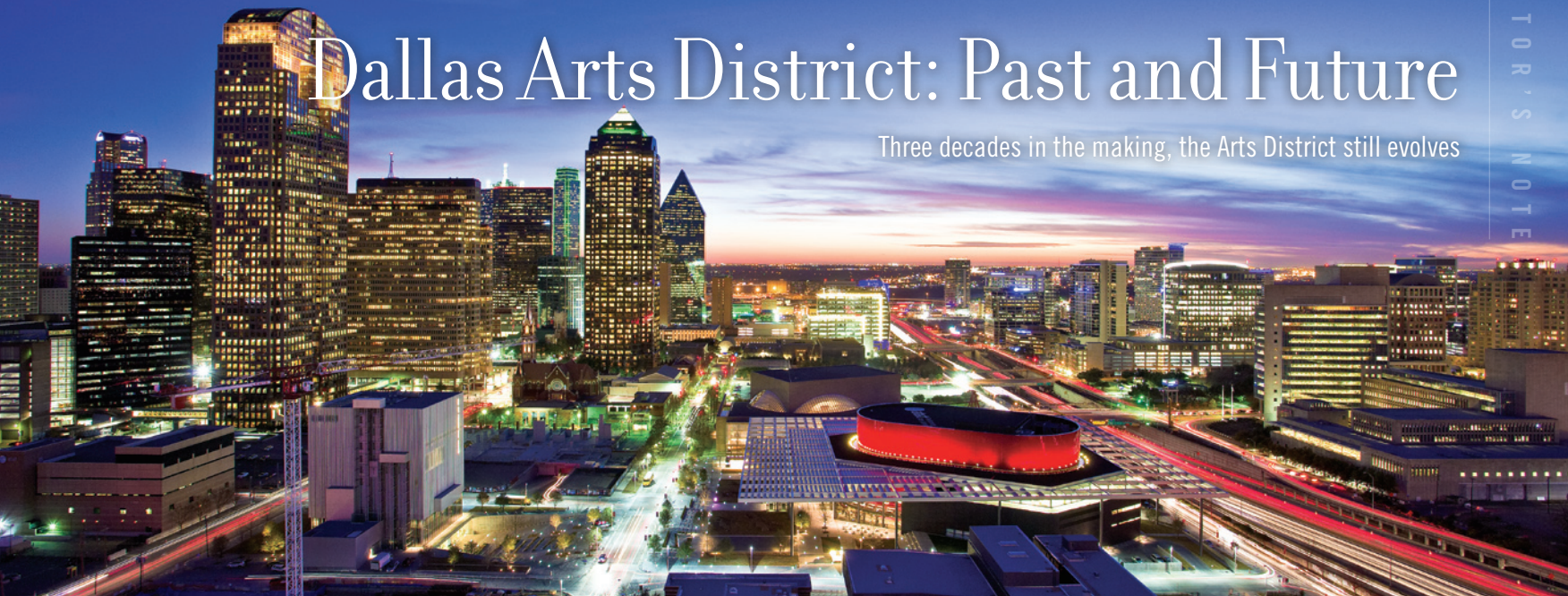
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Dallas Arts District: Past and Future

Three decades in the making, the Arts District still evolves



THE REINVIGORATED DALLAS ARTS DISTRICT provides a timely opportunity to feature performance venues around the state while highlighting the Winspear Opera House and the Wyly Theatre. Both are stunning additions to the downtown cultural enclave that has evolved over three decades through the roller coaster ride of the boom-bust economic cycle.

To learn more about the past and potential future of the Arts District, I invited four Dallas designers to join in an informal roundtable forum in January. The participants were: Duncan Fulton, FAIA, whose firm Good Fulton & Farrell Architects is the architect of record for the Annette Strauss Artist Square; Michael Malone, AIA, who wrote this edition's feature article on the Winspear Opera House (see p. 44); Kevin Sloan, ASLA, who wrote the introductory article to the feature section (see p. 34); and Willis Winter, FAIA, an assistant director of the City of Dallas Park and Recreation Department with responsibility over the planning for the Woodall Rodgers Park currently under construction adjacent to the Arts District.

Our discussion began with reflections on the city's 1982 announcement of the Sasaki Plan that recommended the consolidation of arts venues in the northeast quadrant of downtown. The Sasaki Plan offered a comprehensive approach to developing the future Arts District. The news sent a collective thrill through the local architectural community.

"It had tremendous coverage and what was described sounded like a very exciting concept," recalled Fulton. "They described it in terms of cafés; they described it in terms of what we now call work/live environment; and it incorporated strategies that today we would call New Urbanist—an intense focus on the street [and] an intense focus on uses."

The boldly ambitious plan, Winters remembered, was a quintessential "grand 'Dallas' idea that could only happen here. And the fact that they have stayed with the plan, through changing economies says a lot about the city to stay with something like this and not lose the vision."

The timing of the announcement was important because it arrived during the real estate boom of the early 1980s. The plan placed the Arts District next to the downtown commercial center, which Sloan said was "a developers' playground" at that time. While the Sasaki Plan recommended low massing where buildings met the street, he said, managing scale posed a challenge because "there was an impetus to build high and

go vertical, and not necessarily be as obedient to a kind of uniform fabric as one might hope."

Then, of course, came the real estate crash of the late 1980s and all private development ground to a halt until the close of the millennium.

The eventual recovery of the local economy prompted city leaders to try to complete the vision for the Arts District. Those efforts coalesced as the AT&T Performing Arts Center with projects by marquee architects.

Like many of his peers in Dallas, Malone was ebullient in his praise for how the Winspear and the Wyly complement their surroundings. "The thing that's remarkable to me about the District now, even with all the gaps, is the level of urban gestures that all the buildings incorporate and the way they're designed and work together. If you're in the lobby of the opera house or the theater building, the way they're organized and their spaces are set up to view the other buildings and make connections between them; both Foster and Koolhaas/REX made strong gestures to try to tie their buildings into what was going on around them. And that little lesson in urbanism is something we don't get very often down here."

So what's next for the Arts District? Besides SOM's City Performance Hall and Artist Square, everyone is curious to see the private sector's response to the City of Dallas' Woodall Rodgers Park. Designed by The Office of James Burnett, the municipal park will be created by decking three blocks of the freeway (shown on the right side of the photo above) along the north perimeter of the Arts District. Work on the infrastructure has begun, said Winters, with the first phase of the park scheduled to open by mid-2012. Already, he said, commercial interests are developing plans for tracts of land adjacent to the future park. "There's a very interesting dynamic that has happened now," Winters said. "We've been talking about the Arts District for almost 30 years, centered around Flora Street. Now the emphasis has shifted slightly, a block north and two blocks west to Woodall Rodgers. That in turn has caused a whole new development scenario to happen on the periphery, including impact on the Arts District."

STEPHEN SHARPE

Michael Malone, AIA



Bill Neuhaus, III, FAIA



Anna Mod



Steve Dean



Michael Leinback, AIA



Kevin Sloan, ASLA



Lawrence Connolly, AIA

LAWRENCE CONNOLLY, AIA is enjoying his tenth year practicing in Austin, consulting on and designing animal facilities nationally. When he is not covering his son's football and basketball games for the neighborhood weekly, he is on a bicycle or at a movie. Read his article on the Bass Concert Hall on page 52.

STEVE DEAN is a long-time Texas music historian and veteran music business/venue proprietor. Dean is also the owner of Swiss Alp Dance Hall in Swiss Alp, Texas, and co founder of Texas Dance Hall Preservation, a nonprofit organization that promotes and preserves historic dance halls. He is writing a book for the University of Texas Press, *Texas Dance Halls: Culture and Community in the Lone Star State*. His essay on dance hall preservation can be found on page 28.


MICHAEL LEINBACK, AIA A graduate of UT Arlington, Leinback has spent all of his 29 years of practice in the Tyler area. For the last 17 years, he has enjoyed working in his own small firm, producing projects of all sizes and types. Leinback's passion is searching for and implementing new technology in an architectural practice—including the development of a virtual office. Turn to page 70 to read his article on collaborative practice.

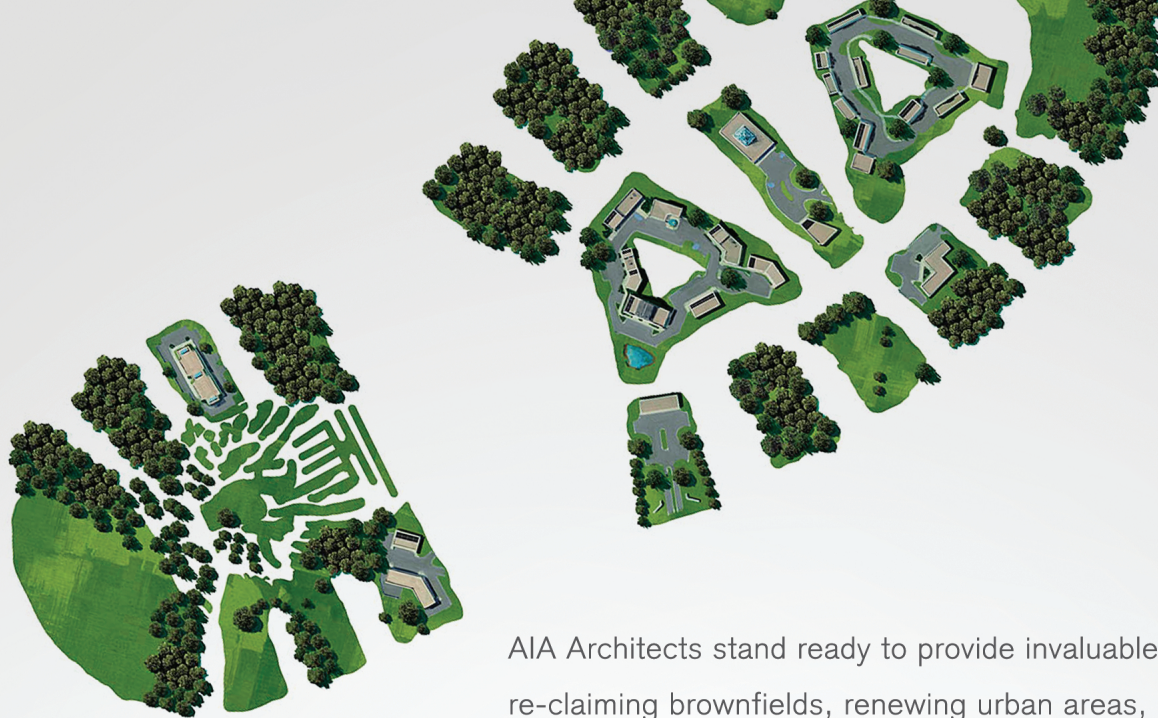
MICHAEL MALONE, AIA is the author of *The Architects Guide to Residential Design*, published last fall by McGraw-Hill. His collaborative studio

is part of WKMC Architects in Dallas and includes an exceptional team, including Alesha Niedziela, Assoc. AIA, and Paul Pascarelli, AIA, pictured with him at architect Anthony Ames show at the High Museum. Malone writes about the Winspear Opera House by Foster + Partners on page 44.

ANNA MOD currently lives in Houston and loves driving around Texas, looking out the window and jumping into rivers and lakes. She is a U.S. Masters swimmer, newly certified scuba diver, and competent navigatrix who enjoys flying the Texas skies with her fella, Jim, an architect and pilot. Read her article on Sengelmann Hall in Schulenburg on page 60.

BILL NEUHAUS, III, FAIA has 42 years of experience wearing bow ties, which he custom orders online. He has given many talks about architecture throughout his career, but never had such a rapt audience as when during one talk he changed bow ties for a later function—removing one, tying another on, yet never losing eye contact with the audience. See his article on the Mitchell Concert Pavilion designed by Horst Berger with Rey de la Reza Architects on page 56.

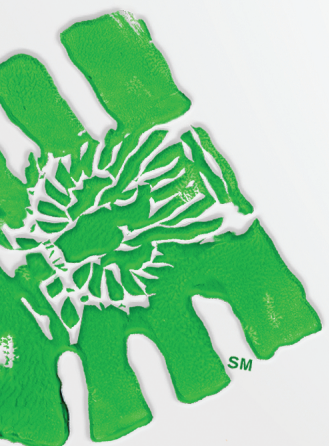
KEVIN SLOAN, ASLA is founding principal of the Kevin Sloan Studio in Dallas. He is currently a visiting assistant professor in architecture and formerly a visiting professor in urban design at Syracuse University in Florence, Italy. Read his essay on public space in Dallas on page 34. 



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New Texas Fellows Announced

Fourteen Texans are among the 134 architects elevated by the AIA to its prestigious College of Fellows, an honor awarded to members who have made contributions of national significance to the profession.

Out of a membership of more than 84,000, fewer than 2,600 AIA members are currently distinguished with the honor of using FAIA after their name. Fellowship is conferred on architects with at least 10 years of membership in the AIA who have made significant contributions in the following areas: the aesthetic, scientific, and practical efficiency of the profession; the standards of architectural education, training, and practice; the building industry through leadership in the AIA and other related professional organizations; advancement of living standards of people through an improved environment; and to society through significant public service.

The 2010 Jury of Fellows was chaired by Allan Kehrt, FAIA, of KSS Architects in Princeton, N.J., with jurors Henry C. Alexander Jr., FAIA, of Rizo, Carreno & Partners in Coral Gables, Fla.; Jeffrey A. Huberman, FAIA, of Gantt Huberman Architects in Charlotte, N.C.; Paula J. Loomis, FAIA, of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Norfolk, Va.; Robert D. Loversidge, FAIA, of Schooley Caldwell Associates in Columbus, Ohio; Gregory S. Palermo, FAIA, of Iowa State University in Ames; and Jim W. Sealy, FAIA, of Jim Sealy Architect/Consultant in Dallas.

The new Fellows will be invested in the College of Fellows at the 2010 AIA National Convention and Design Exposition in Miami on June 11.

The following TSA members are 2010 Fellows:

Donna Carter, FAIA, of Carter Design in Austin, was elected to receive this honor because of her leadership within her local community through guidance in planning projects and preservation efforts.

Juan Cotera, FAIA, of Cotera Reed Architects in Austin, was elevated to Fellow for his work to improve the lives of Austin's residents through architecture and planning.

Herman Dyal, FAIA, of Dyal and Partners in Austin, was recognized for his work at the intersection of architecture, graphic design, and wayfinding.



Carter



Cotera



Dyal



Harvey



Hays



Hickson



Hightower



Housewright



Mashburn



Morris



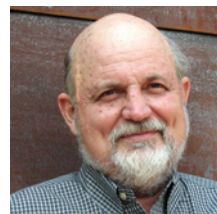
Nader



Pemberton-Haugh



Potter



Stanley

Thomas Harvey, FAIA, of HKS in Dallas, was honored for his healthcare research on how architecture influences safety, improves patient outcomes, and increases operating efficiencies while reducing costs.

Diane Hays, FAIA, of the University of Texas at San Antonio, was elected to Fellow for her critical role in forging alliances between academia and the profession to empower students to pursue careers of substance and service.

Kimberly Hickson, FAIA, of Gensler in Houston, was recognized for her contributions to cost-effective sustainable design through collaborative project management, and an extensive body of training sessions, presentations, and publications.

Albert "Irby" Hightower, FAIA, of Alamo Architects in San Antonio, was elected to receive this honor because of his leadership in transforming the 13-mile extension of the San Antonio River.

James Tipton "Tip" Housewright, FAIA, of Omniplan in Dallas, was honored for his service to society through his voluntary leadership in transforming numerous organizations and communities.

Joe Mashburn, FAIA, of the University of Houston, was recognized for his mentorship that has significantly contributed to practice and education by influencing architects and educators.

Bob Morris, FAIA, of Corgan Associates in Dallas, was honored for his advancing the profession of architecture through leadership and innovation in the design of mission-critical data centers.

James Nader, FAIA, of Nader Design in Fort Worth, was recognized for his collaborative efforts with faith communities to preserve historic sacred places and for inspiring architects to contribute to the public good.

Sue Ann Pemberton-Haugh, FAIA, of Main Street Architects in San Antonio, was elected to Fellow for her academic work that takes UTSA students to Mexico where they learn about vanishing building traditions.

Jeff Potter, FAIA, of Potter Architects in Dallas, was honored for his voluntary leadership of the AIA, including service as TSA president in 2004 and as regional director on the AIA Board.

Lars Stanley, FAIA, of Stanley Architects and Artisans in Austin, was elected Fellow in recognition of his passion for craftsmanship in making a diverse range of built projects.

TA STAFF

AIA Honor for *Texas Architect*

For 60 years, the members of TSA have financially supported *Texas Architect* through their dues while also contributing in various ways toward making the magazine one of the best AIA component publications. That long-term collective effort is being recognized this year by the AIA with an Institute Honor for Collaborative Achievement bestowed as part of the 2010 AIA Honor Awards program.

Institute Honors for Collaborative Achievement are presented each year by the AIA to recognize and encourage distinguished achievements of allied professionals, clients, organizations, architect teams, knowledge communities, and others who have had a beneficial influence on or advanced the architectural profession.

Texas Architect is among three 2010 honorees. The others are the Alaska Design Forum and *The Architect's Newspaper*. Other recent recipients have included the periodicals *Harvard Design Magazine* (2007) and *Metropolis Magazine* (2009). The list of honorees was announced Jan. 29, with the presentation of awards scheduled on June 11 during the AIA convention in Miami. *TA* Editor Stephen Sharpe will accept the award on behalf of the magazine's staff and TSA's 6,000 members, and will participate in a panel discussion with representatives of other honorees during the AIA convention. Other members of the magazine's staff include Art Director Julie Pizzo, Assistant Editor Noelle Heinze, and Associate Publisher Andrea Exter.

"Receiving this honor underscores how *Texas Architect* represents a truly collaborative effort among TSA's members, particularly those who volunteer to write articles and others who help advise *TA*'s staff through the TSA's Publications Committee. That's been the case since David

Baer started *TA* in 1950, with his predecessors making subsequent improvements, most notably in the early 1970s under Jim Pfluger." Sharpe said. "Because TSA members are committed to *Texas Architect*, and with the continued support of our advertisers, *TA* remains an autonomously published magazine. That's rare among AIA component publications and allows *TA*'s staff freedom to provide the best architectural journalism in a format that is envied across the nation for its elegant graphic design."

With a circulation of approximately 12,000, *Texas Architect*'s reach extends far beyond the state's borders. Subscribers in 40 states are included in *TA*'s far-flung community of practitioners, emerging professionals, architectural students and faculty, and design-savvy members of the general public.

The awards jury's comments about *Texas Architect* included the following: "A terrific example of high-quality architectural journalism—a model for state and regional components. As a public journalistic forum, the breadth [and] depth of content are clearly relevant beyond statewide interest, to national and international, with far-reaching topics of cultural, social, and professional interest."

The nomination for *Texas Architect* was submitted in October by Jeff Potter, FAIA, who at the time served as AIA Regional Director. The nomination stressed the multi-level collaboration of TSA members that supports the bimonthly publication known nationally for its high-quality graphic design and editorial excellence. Accompanying the nomination were letters of recommendation written by five esteemed architectural professionals—2006 AIA Gold Medalist Antoine Predock, FAIA; *Architectural Record* Editor-in-Chief Robert Ivy, FAIA; Bill Lacy, FAIA, former executive direc-

tor of the Pritzker Prize; Thomas Fisher, Assoc. AIA, dean of the University of Minnesota's College of Design and former editorial director of *Progressive Architecture*; and Frederic Schwartz, FAIA, an internationally recognized architect based in New York City.

Ivy wrote in his letter: "As one who routinely scans the architectural press, this editor has high regard for the work of the *Texas Architect*. Some association publications are intended for a small, highly targeted audience and hence limited in their range and appeal. However, *Texas Architect* achieves a graphically distinctive, quality-driven result that takes the name and work of *Texas Architects* far beyond its own borders... Particularly noteworthy are the contributing writers outside of the architectural profession, a situation that increases the publication's credibility and simultaneously brings in complementary points of view."

Fisher stated in his letter: "Our profession has suffered from the paradox of being largely invisible to the public, even as our work remains a pervasive part of people's daily lives. Publications like *Texas Architect* address that directly, making not only architecture more visible but also the architectural profession."

More information on *Texas Architect*'s award is posted at www.aia.org/practicing/awards/AIAB082152.

The jury for the 2010 Collaborative Achievement Award was chaired by Meggan M. Lux, AIA, of Urban Works Architecture in Chicago; Terrance J. Brown, FAIA, of WH Pacific in Albuquerque; Barbara A. Nadel, FAIA, of Barbara Nadel Architect in Forest Hills, New York; Thomas McKittrick, FAIA, of Houston; and Peter Steinbrueck, FAIA, of Steinbrueck Urban Strategies in Seattle.

STEPHEN SHARPE

AIA Recognizes Brochstein Pavilion

One Texas project—the Brochstein Pavilion at Rice University by Thomas Phifer and Partners—is among 14 projects recognized with 2010 Institute Honor Awards for Architecture.

Centrally located on the Rice campus, the Raymond and Susan Brochstein Pavilion was conceived as a destination for students and faculty to interact and share ideas in a relaxed environment. Sited at an important intersection of campus pathways to create a new hub of activ-

ity, the pavilion encourages interaction without interrupting pedestrian movement through campus. The sensitive addition of trees, fountains, and garden seating areas (landscape design by The Office of James Burnett) seamlessly blends the new pavilion into the existing quadrangle. The Brochstein Pavilion is capped by a steel trellis structure that protects the building, extending in all directions to shade the surrounding seating terrace with an array of small aluminum tubes.

Jury's comments included: "The only non-brick building at Rice University, the Brochstein

Pavilion is a deceptively simple glass, aluminum, and steel jewel that solves complex issues on campus and activates the open space of this important circulation area. Rigorous geometry, beautiful proportions, and attention to detailing... Quiet, elegant, and modern amidst traditional buildings, it is an exquisite addition to the campus fabric."

More information on the Honor Awards program is posted at www.aia.org/practicing/AIAB082029, including a list of the other recognized projects. ■

Malarkey Named 'Young Architect'

Brian Malarkey, AIA, of Kirksey in Houston is among nine honorees in this year's list of AIA "Young Architects." The Young Architects Award is given to individuals who have shown exceptional leadership and made significant contributions to the profession in an early stage of their architectural career. Architect members of the AIA who have been licensed to practice architecture fewer than 10 years by the submission deadline are eligible to be nominated.

A graduate of Texas A&M University, Malarkey serves as an executive vice president with Kirksey and as the firm's director of eco-services. His work with the AIA has included chairing the Houston chapter's Committee on the Environment in 2003 and presiding over the chapter as its president in 2008.

During his presidency, his focus on sustainability cemented Houston as a credible source for green building information and knowledge. He initiated five major programs—the Green Building Resource Center for the City of Houston; Houston Disaster Action following Hurricane



Malarkey

Ike and helping 567 homeowners in the area; the Greenworks Houston exhibition and publication (continuing now as Greenworks Houston 2); the Green E-Toolbox monthly newsletter to AIA Houston members; and a project to place solar panels on the George R. Brown Convention

Center. Those successful initiatives were all in addition to a myriad of other responsibilities and new ideas Malarkey continues to generate as the chapter's past-president. He also has testified before the Texas Legislature about proposed laws related to sustainable design. Such activities have brought credence and admiration from state and local officials for the AIA.

In practice, Malarkey has achieved many green building "firsts" for Houston and the state, including the first LEED building, commercial interiors, core and shell, and speculative office in Houston, and the first LEED for existing buildings in Texas, his firm's own office. He has won four individual awards and 23 design awards for buildings on which he served a leadership role, and his projects have been featured in national and regional publications.

The AIA jury's comments included the following statement: "He is a pioneer for green building efforts, pursuing the transformation of Houston's built environment and steadily becoming more and more influential on a national level." ®

AIA Corpus Christi Awards Three Projects

CORPUS CHRISTI The Corpus Christi chapter of the AIA announced its 2009 Design Award winners on Dec. 15. Nineteen entries were received with work completed between 2005 and 2009, and the submittals were judged by a distinguished jury of architectural peers from outside the area. Richter Architects was awarded all three honors.

National Museum of the Pacific War, Fredericksburg received the Honor Award. The 40,000-sf addition and renovation is designed with direct reference to Fredericksburg's historic fabric and metaphorical reference to the Pacific theater of World War II. The multilevel building interacts with pedestrians at street level then the scale steps up within to accommodate gallery space. The jury commented that the design was "well executed" and used "volumes of space to good advantage."

A Citation Award went to **Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies, Corpus Christi**. The 57,000-sf facility by Richter Architects with WHR Architects was created as a new gateway for the Texas A&M-Corpus Christi

campus while still fitting in with earlier campus architecture. One panelist noted "even the most basic of spaces received careful attention to detail."

Del Mar Health Sciences & Emerging Technologies Complex, Corpus Christi also received a Citation Award. Completed in 2006, the new 160,000-sf "multi-dimensional facility" by Richter Architects with WHR Architects creates a visual and physical center for the campus while encompassing 20 different functions within one building. ®



National Museum of the Pacific War



Del Mar Health Sciences & Emerging Technologies



Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies

Cynthia Woods Mitchell (1922-2009)

H O U S T O N Cynthia Woods Mitchell – like Ima Hogg, Dominique de Menil, and Jane Blaffer Owen – was an influential and discerning woman who changed the cultural and architectural landscape of the Houston area. Also like the others, Cynthia Mitchell had an eye for aesthetic perfection and a passion for beauty.

Since her death two days after Christmas, she has been eulogized for her sparkling personality, generosity, and caring nature, qualities that allowed this mother of 10 to gently balance her family obligations with a fiery community spirit centered on the arts, historic preservation, the environment, and architecture. Along with her children, she left her husband of 66 years, George P. Mitchell, 23 grandchildren, four great-grandchildren, and a remarkable legacy.

Cynthia Loretta Woods and her twin sister Pamela were born in New York City, where they lived until 1930 when their then-single mother moved the family back to her Illinois hometown to be near relatives. After graduation from high school in 1938, the family moved again, this time to Houston where the twins worked to support their mother and themselves while taking night classes at the University of Houston. On a train trip home from a 1941 Texas A&M football game in College Station, she met her intellectual match and the love of her life, George Mitchell. They were married two years later in a double-ring, Halloween night ceremony with her sister and lawyer Raymond Loomis. The Mitchells lived first in Houston then Galveston, George's hometown, while he completed his tour of duty with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

After the war, the Mitchells moved back to Houston where Cynthia had a chance to work with an architect for the first time. The couple commissioned Milton Foy Martin to design a house at 3303 N. McGregor Way in 1950. The house, still standing, is a two-story "modern" house of its time—flat roof, large plate windows, and earth-colored wood siding.

Three years later, Martin also designed a house for the Mitchells in Galveston at 168 San Marino Drive, one of several they subsequently built on the island for themselves and their children. (Ford & Rogers were consulting architects for the San Marino house. The Mitchells reportedly knew Jerry Rogers, who was O'Neil Ford's partner in the early 1950s.) She was certainly the primary client for these residences and many more to come here in Texas, Aspen, and else-

where, because her husband was busy building Mitchell Energy & Development, which he began in 1946 and sold for \$3.5 billion in 2001.

Architecturally the most significant house Cynthia Mitchell built was their family home at 11010 Wickwood Drive, designed by the Wrightian architects MacKie & Kamrath. The sprawling, low-slung 12,500-sf house cost \$700,000, which was evident in its beautifully crafted details and grounds of this masterpiece of organic modern design. The plan had four interlocking diamond-shaped wings expanding into a lush landscape. According to a *Fortune* magazine article, Mrs. Mitchell gave the archi-



George and Cynthia Woods Mitchell

tecs a 247-page, color-coded list of requirements for the house. The house was demolished in 2003 for new construction.

Although Galveston was George Mitchell's hometown, Cynthia adopted it as her own and was behind substantial preservation there that probably saved many of the island city's great architectural treasures and its tourist industry. In 1976, the Mitchells purchased the T. J. League Building (1871) where the great Galveston architect Nicholas Clayton had his offices in the late-nineteenth century. According to Boone Powell, FAIA, of Ford Powell & Carson, the couple's Galveston preservation efforts were successful because of Cynthia Mitchell. She worked tirelessly with FP&C through the restoration of 17 commercial buildings, mostly in the Strand Historic District, while he was involved with the technical and business issues such as tax

credits. For their largest project, the Tremont House, which blossomed from the Leon and H. Blum Drygoods Store (1879; Eugene T. Heiner), Mrs. Mitchell brought in Ann Milligan Gray, the Chicago interior designer known for decorating hotels and clubs throughout the country.

In 1985, with great flair, the Mitchells brought Mardi Gras back to Galveston; today it draws over 500,000 people. Houston architect Ed Eubanks, AIA, also worked closely with the Mitchells and fondly remembers meetings and trips with them. He worked with her on putting Luigi's Risorante in the Ball Hutchings-Sealy Building (1895-96; Nicholas Clayton), where, he remembers, she was adamant about saving the bank vault as a place to dine.

In 2001, Cynthia and George Mitchell received the Louise DuPont Crowninshield Award National Trust for Historic Preservation for their commitment to historic preservation and restoration of 20 Galveston historic buildings. The Mitchells also were recognized in 1999 by the Texas Society of Architects/AIA for their efforts to improve the state's built environment.

Although George Mitchell's degree from A&M was in petroleum engineering, his interest in real estate and planning led him to follow examples set in other parts of the country for modern planned cities, beginning with Reston, Va., in 1963. Around the same time Mr. Mitchell began to envision such a master-planned community for Texas, and in 1964 he bought a 28,000-acre tract about 30 miles north of Houston.

By all accounts it was Mrs. Mitchell who chose the name, The Woodlands, perhaps alluding to her middle name. While she was not directly involved in the development, she was always full of new ideas for this environmentally aware town. She shaped the couple's efforts to establish more sustainable construction for a healthier future and championed a series of conferences called "Limits to Growth" beginning in 1974, the year The Woodlands opened. A couple of years later, while visiting her daughter in Austin, she attended an outdoor ballet performance at the Zilker Hillside Theater. So taken with it and its eclectic audience, she proposed the idea of a similar venue in The Woodlands. The Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion, designed by Horst Berger, opened in 1990 with a total capacity of 10,000. "I knew her best as a pavilion," one blogger wrote after her death. Indeed we probably all did. (See article on p. 56.)

BARRIE SCARDINO



Wright-Influenced NASA Landmark Redone as Offices for Houston Parks

H O U S T O N One of Houston's landmarks of modern architecture has been rededicated after a \$16 million renovation. The historic Farnsworth & Chambers Co. building, designed by MacKie & Kamrath and completed in 1957, has been the home of Houston's Parks and Recreation Department since 1977. Known as the Gragg Building after the donor of adjacent parkland, it is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is a Registered Texas Historic Landmark and a City of Houston Landmark.

When the construction firm Farnsworth & Chambers Company built its new headquarters in southeast Houston in 1957, it was following a trend for suburban corporate campuses. MacKie & Kamrath had completed similar complexes for Schlumberger Oil further south on the new Gulf Freeway and one for Humble Oil Research on the west side of Houston, both in 1953. The long, low, one-story plan was composed of wings pin-wheeling out from around a courtyard, extend-

ing into the bayou-side site of moss-draped live oaks and landscaping designed by Garret Eckbo. The property was acquired by the Gragg family in 1961 as a real estate investment and briefly leased by the Manned Spacecraft Center of the newly-formed National Aeronautics and Space Administration in 1962-1964. The City of Houston purchased it in 1976 to consolidate the administration and maintenance operations of the Parks Department.

Although Karl Kamrath never studied or worked under Frank Lloyd Wright, he was more adept and creative with Wright's vocabulary of form, space, and ornament than most of Wright's acolytes. With a successful practice for four decades, from the late 1930s to the late 1970s, Kamrath was able to apply Wright's principles to more diverse types of projects than any in the master's oeuvre. He achieved a singular character for Farnsworth & Chambers using battered walls and truncated towers of blue-green ledgerstone. Narrow horizontal bands of steel windows shaded by projecting roof slabs combine with the coarse stone to give an

impression of an in-filled ruin, overtones that recall Wright's pre-Columbian interests.

The renovation respects Kamrath's original intentions in spatial organization and interior and exterior materials. Later renovations that obscured circulation around the central courtyard and divided interior spaces were removed. New lanterns cut into the roofs, bringing natural light to previously dim interior spaces and forming a vertical compliment to the pervasive horizontality of the building's spaces. Original mahogany paneling used extensively throughout the interior was conserved and large mahogany return air grills were reused in conference rooms to create views to courts.

The renovation was designed by Harrison Kornberg Architects, with preservation consultant Anna Mod of SWCA and landscaping by Asakura Robinson Company. The project, expected to receive a LEED Silver certification, also included the conversion of an existing metal warehouse structure into the Recreation and Wellness Division Building.

GERALD MOORHEAD, FAIA



(top) The Gragg Building underwent a \$16 million renovation that reused existing materials to preserve its original architectural character. (left) In 1962 after its sale by Farnsworth & Chambers Company it was leased to NASA, six of the seven original Mercury astronauts flanked Dr. Robert L. Gilruth, the director of NASA's Manned Spacecraft Center, as they posed behind the building's new sign. From the left are Virgil I. Grissom, Alan B. Shepard, Walter M. Schirra, Dr. Gilruth, Scott Carpenter, L. Gordon Cooper, and Donald K. Slayton.

UTSA Team Places in HABS Contest

SAN ANTONIO A team of students from the University of Texas at San Antonio has been recognized with the 2009 Kenneth Lanier Anderson Prize by the Texas Architectural Foundation (TAF) for measured drawings of the Spanish Governor's Palace in San Antonio. The prize was presented in November in conjunction with the annual Charles E. Peterson Prize organized jointly by the National Park Service, the Athenaeum of Philadelphia, and the American Institute of Architects to highlight student work for the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS).

Created in 1933 from the perceived need to mitigate the negative effects upon our history and culture of rapidly vanishing architectural resources, the Historic American Buildings Survey was the nation's first federal preservation program. Architects would create measured drawings to scale as well as photographs to properly document the nation's buildings, whether for historical preservation or future necessity due to potential damage.

The annual Peterson Prize competition, now in its twenty-seventh year, encourages programs at accredited schools of architecture in Texas to have teams of students record buildings to HABS standards and submit the drawings for inclusion in the HABS Collection in the Library of Congress. In addition to generating more than 5,300 sheets of drawings for the HABS Collection to date, the competition presents awards each year totaling \$9,000 to the winning student teams. Drawings must document a building that has not been recorded by HABS through measured drawings, or add further documentation to an existing set of HABS drawings that makes a substantial contribution to the understanding of the significance of the building.

TAF's Anderson Prize – which honors the memory of Kenneth Lanier Anderson, a former chief of HABS and an alumnus of Texas Tech University – is presented to the team of students from a Texas school that ranks highest among the finalists.

The 2009 Anderson Prize recognized the project on the Spanish Governor's Palace by the team from UTSA's College of Architecture, led by Professor Sue Ann Pemberton-Haugh, FAIA. The team of 18 students tied for fourth place in the 2009 Peterson Prize competition. Team participants were Aida Barkley, Arlene Dominguez, Hadley Dulnig, Christopher Gonzalez, Daniel Lazarine, Lan Li, Keishi Matsunaga, Brandon

Melland, Burt Moyer, Holly Nicholson, Christopher Ortiz, Miguel Rodriguez, Jason Sandoval, Adriana Swindle, Kristin Vines, Jacqueline Warner, Josh Yang, and Jessica Zunker.

The UTSA team received \$750 from the Peterson Prize sponsors for its fourth-place recognition, along with an additional \$500 from TAF. The team tied for fourth place with the College of Charleston/Clemson University's Graduate Program in Historic Preservation. The team's project was the Magnolia Cemetery in Charleston, S.C.

First place was won by the School of the Art Institute of Chicago's Historic Preservation Department for documenting On Leong Merchants Association in Chicago.

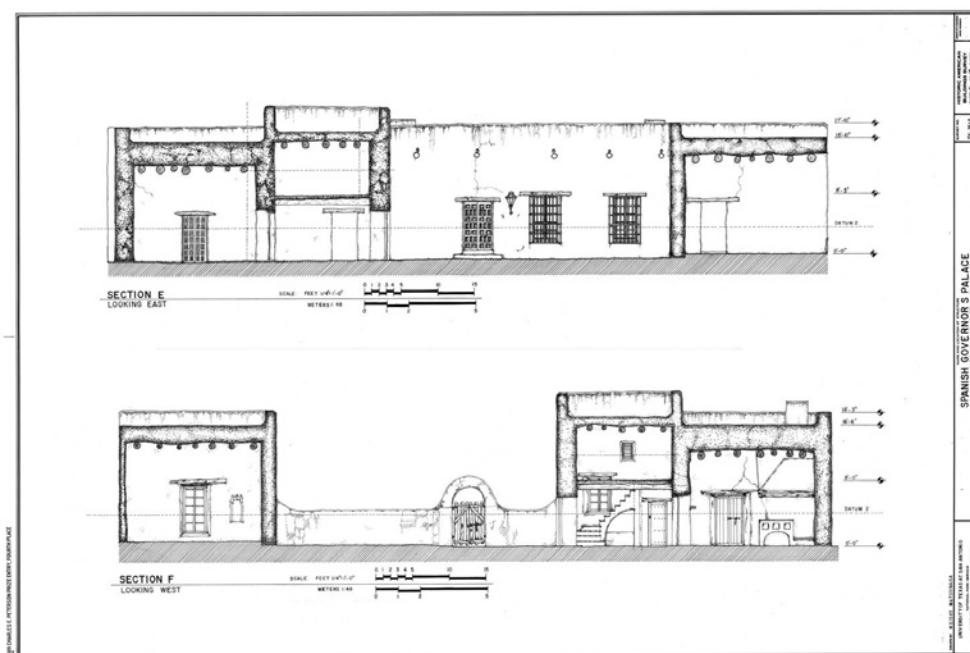
Second place went to Kent State University's College of Architecture for recording the Manatoc Reservation in Summit, Ohio. Third place recognized the project by the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee's School of Architecture & Urban Planning on Boynton Chapel in Baileys Harbor, Wis. Honorable mentions were presented to teams, one from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette's School of Architecture and Design for drawings of the Academy of the Sacred Heart Chapel in Grand Coteau, La., and another from the University of Cincinnati's School of Architecture and Interior Design for documentation of the Boulter House in Cincinnati.

Access more information about the winning teams at www.aia.org/practicing/groups/kc/ALAB081873.

STEPHEN SHARPE



Following the standards of the Historical American Building Survey, the UTSA team produced a set of measured drawings documenting the Spanish Governor's Palace in downtown San Antonio. The keystone above the front entrance is marked with the coat-of-arms of Spanish King Ferdinand VI and the inscription 'año 1749 se acabo' suggesting the date of construction. The team's drawings will become part of the HABS archives that can be viewed via the Library of Congress' Web site.



Designs of Trolley Stops Chosen For Dallas' Bustling West Village

DALLAS In the heart of the lively neighborhood called Uptown Dallas, the M-Line of the McKinney Avenue Transit Authority covers a 3.5-mile circuit with a fleet of preserved historic trolley cars. The vintage trolleys are an important link in an urban mass-transit system that connects Uptown Dallas with the downtown to the south, shuttling local residents and visitors to popular restaurants, shops, and night spots. At the upper reaches of Uptown is the live/work/play enclave known as West Village, located at the intersection of McKinney and Lemmon.

Although the trolleys are frequently the preferred option for transportation in and around West Village, three of the M-Line's stops consist of nothing more than a sign on a pole. To improve their visibility and perhaps increase ridership even more by providing shelter, local business owners contacted AIA Dallas to ask for help in holding a competition to design new trolley stops. The competition was planned to coincide with last year's celebration of the McKinney Avenue trolley's twentieth anniversary. The architectural design competition was facilitated by the AIA chapter's Young Architects Forum (YAF), with entries solicited from young architects, architectural interns, and students in the local community.

In September, a jury selected winning entries in four categories along with an overall "best of show." The winners were: (Best Design and Best of Show) Enrique Greenwell, Assoc. AIA, of HKS; (Best Student Entry) Brandon

Smith of the University of Texas at Arlington; (Best Intern Entry) Michael Peguero, Assoc. AIA, of nocturnTROPIC3; and (Best Licensed Architect) Ben Reavis, AIA, of Oglesby Green.

Although the owners of West Village intend to eventually erect the trolley stops, there is no construction schedule or timeline for selection of the design that will be built.

Criteria called for structures that would be simple to construct yet architecturally significant. The architectural program included a footprint no larger than 8'6" wide by 4'5" long and 8'5" high with a bench to seat four to six people protected by a canopy or overhead element. Each designer or team of designers was free to specify suitable materials and a lighting strategy. The entry could include either one design for all three stops or three unique designs, as long as the designer provided an explanation for the latter.

In addition to the programmatic outline, the business owners of West Village asked that designs fit into the architectural vocabulary of the existing buildings and be distinctive from other transit structures in the area (such as city bus shelters).

In conjunction with the competition, a blog, www.trolleycomp.blogspot.com, was set up to provide online access to programming information, updates, and answers to questions.

Registration cost was free, thanks to West Village's willingness to support the program costs during a challenging economic climate for the architectural profession. The competition offered four main awards, along with a Best of Show and a Best Design in each group. By the close of registration on Sept. 4, 120 individuals

and teams had entered their intent to submit a design via electronic media (thereby saving participants the cost of printing presentation boards).

The submittal deadline was Sept. 10, with 60 entries received. A preliminary judging panel of YAF members narrowed the total to 24 semi-finalists, eight in each category. Finalists were then selected by panel that consisted of three developer/owners of West Village along with Stephen Park, AIA, of Corgan Associates; Ron Wommack, FAIA; and Paul Pascarelli, AIA, of WKMC Architects as jury foreman.

Awards were presented at an awards reception held and sponsored by West Village. During the week prior to the reception the 24 semi-finalists' boards were on public display in the shop windows of West Village.

PAUL PASCARELLI, AIA



Best Student Entry: Brandon Smith



Best Design/Best of Show: Enrique Greenwell, Assoc. AIA



Best Licensed Architect Entry: Ben Reavis, AIA



Best Intern Entry: Michael Peguero, Assoc. AIA

Preservation Texas: 'Endangered' Places

A U S T I N Each year since 2003 the nonprofit Preservation Texas presents its list of "Texas' Most Endangered Places," and this year's roster of seven places, including the San Jacinto Battlefield Historic Site in Harris County. The organization's objective is to call attention to significant places that its leadership deems imperiled by an uncertain future.

Among the group's 2010 most endangered places is the **San Jacinto Battleground State Historic Site** where the Texian army under the command of Sam Houston decimated a division of the Mexican army under the command of Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna on April 20-21, 1836. Located within the city limits of La Porte, the battleground was acquired by the state in several transactions in the late 1800s and early 1900s to create the first state park in Texas in 1907. The San Jacinto Monument and reflection pool were constructed within the property in 1936-1939, and a berth was created on the site for the Battleship Texas in 1948. As a consequence of subsidence and dredging of the Houston Ship Channel, 115 acres of the battlefield were subsequently lost, and a levee was constructed on the north boundary of the state park in the 1970s. Much of the battleground is located today within the boundaries of the state-owned San Jacinto Battleground State Historic Site, but portions of the battleground lie outside the state boundaries and are not protected. Threats to the historic landscape include industrial encroachment as well as proposed construction projects. The other sites listed on the 2010 list are:

The Austin Woman's Club in Austin was designed by San Antonio architect Alfred Giles in 1874 and constructed as a two-story-plus-basement residence. Giles remodeled the home 20 years later for a subsequent owner into a French Romanesque structure complete with crenellation and buttressed walls. In 1929, the



The San Jacinto Battleground State Historic Site, administered by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, is where the Texian victory won independence from Mexico in 1836. Preservation Texas seeks to protect the nineteenth-century character of the 1,200-acre site.

Austin Woman's Club purchased the building, eventually adding a dining wing in 1960. Deterioration and antiquated infrastructure now threaten the building.

Herff Farm in Kendall County is one of several large farmsteads in Central Texas threatened by the sprawl of neighboring development and a lack of family members to carry on the tradition. Located near Boerne, the Herff Farm is an excellent example of the original farmsteads established in the area by German immigrants. In 1852, Dr. Ferdinand Herff acquired 10,000 acres at the confluence of Menger and Cibolo Creeks. The Herff family managed the property until the early 1920s before selling the property to new owners. Today, the 62-acre Herff Farm centers around the two-story, limestone family home built in 1883. In 2007, the Cibolo Nature Center began acquiring the land endangered by several construction projects.

Downtown Austin's Historic Assets are threatened by the city's burgeoning urban population and falling tax revenues that negatively impact efforts to preserve the community's cultural heritage. Austin's formerly booming economy, combined with local incentives to increase density in the city's core as a means of reducing urban sprawl, has transformed the downtown with residential towers and rising commercial rents. In 2007, the City Council began to draft a downtown development plan that encourages downtown density but fails to provide protection for many historic sites, including several mid-century buildings. Preservationists have urged city leaders to articulate a vision for Austin that protects its historic fabric, but as the city continues to grow while the pressure on the small-scale historic buildings increases.

Continued on page 22

Bastrop Named 'Distinctive Destination'

Bastrop is among this year's Dozen Distinction Destinations as named by the National Trust for Preservation. The nonprofit organization compiles a list annually to call attention to cities and towns that "offer an authentic visitor experience by combining dynamic downtowns, cultural diversity, attractive architecture,

cultural landscapes, and a strong commitment to historic preservation, sustainability, and revitalization."

Situated on the banks of the Colorado River, the town of Bastrop dates back more than 175 years when it was established as one of Stephen F. Austin's original colonies in 1832. Many historic houses and buildings have been restored, and the downtown features several locally

owned restaurants and shops that draw visitors throughout the year.

The other places included on this year's list are Cedar Falls, Iowa; the Chestnut Hill neighborhood in Philadelphia, Penn.; the Crooked Road: Virginia's Heritage Music Trail; Fort Collins, Colo.; Huntsville, Ala.; Marquette, Mich.; Provincetown, Mass.; Rockland, Maine; Simsbury, Conn.; Sitka, Alaska; and St. Louis, Mo. ☐

During the recent economic boom, Austin lost many buildings that defined the downtown and provided a well-known backdrop to the State Capitol. (Texas Preservation's 2007 list included Capitol View Corridors, sightlines that converge on the Capitol from major Austin landmarks and vantage points. Downtown development was seen as a threat to the 30 designated view corridors.)

Old Llano County Jail, affectionately known as "Red Top," was constructed in 1895 by the J. Pauly Jail Building and Manufacturing Co. of St. Louis. The granite exterior was quarried locally and the iron bars for the cells and windows were transported by rail from St. Louis and assembled on site. The central tower housed the gallows. In 1982, the jail was condemned and in 2002 the county built a new jailhouse. The City of Llano purchased the jail in 2005 to help the county fund its restoration of the Llano County Courthouse. Poor drainage and the settling of the foundation has created large cracks in the jail's walls. The east and west gables are falling away from the central tower and many of the windows are in disrepair, allowing further damage. A nonprofit organization, the Friends

of the Llano Red Top Jail, was formed to assist the city with the preservation of the jail.

Brazos Drive-In Theatre in Granbury on US 377 opened in 1952 as one of the few entertainment venues in Hood County. At that time, more than 400 drive-in theaters operated across Texas. Today, the Brazos Drive-In is one of 12 still in use. Challenged by low attendance and increased overhead, the property is surrounded by encroaching development and lights from the adjacent high school football stadium diminish the movie experience.



Encroaching development threatens Granbury's Brazos Drive-in, built during the heyday of outdoor movies.

Swenson Swimming Pool and Bathhouse in Spur, Dickens County, was built in 1937 on land donated by Erick P. Swenson of Spur Ranch for a public park. As the area was experiencing devastating losses due to the Depression and the drought, the city and the federal Works Progress Administration partnered to establish a place for social interaction and recreation for the children of the surrounding rural communities. The pool—and its bathhouse, constructed with local stone and petrified wood—was the only recreational amenity for miles and provided a welcome reprieve from the heat and hard labor that was customary to the ranch and farm families during the summer. The bathhouse is in fair condition and the roof was repaired in 2008 after a storm. However, the concrete pool was closed last June because leaks and erosion threatens its complete collapse. In an isolated rural town, the pool and bathhouse continue to serve as one of the only recreational and social venues for the youth of Spur and surrounding communities.

For more information about Texas Preservation or the Most Endangered Places list, visit www.preservationtexas.org. 10

TSA Board Seeks More Openness In Plans for Governor's Mansion

A U S T I N In response to recent controversy over a proposed 3,000-sf addition to the Texas Governor's Mansion, the Texas Society of Architects/AIA Board of Directors unanimously passed a resolution on Jan. 23 that calls for more transparency in procedures by state officials tasked with protecting historic structures. The Board's action followed a recommendation from TSA's Historic Resources Committee to publicly weigh in on the issue.

Last October, the State Preservation Board (SPB) announced plans to expand the 153-year-old mansion, but abruptly withdrew those plans in January amid debate among the preservationist community questioning the potential impact on the landmark and arguing against setting a precedent that might negatively affect other historic structures. SPB officials were considering a two-story addition to the 8,900-sf residence until concerns were voiced by two former governors and several state legislators, along with preservationists, architects, and historians. The Governor's Mansion, heavily damaged in June 2008 by an unknown arsonist,

is scheduled to undergo a \$26 million restoration. At the time of the fire, Gov. Rick Perry and his family had temporarily moved out of the mansion and its contents had been emptied to prepare for a planned restoration.

The latest plans for the restoration were put on hold after the State Preservation Board decided in October to seek approval from the Texas Historical Commission for expanding the Governor's Mansion to provide larger residential quarters for the occupants. However, concerns about the expansion culminated in a Jan. 5 hearing before SPB officials when the president of the Heritage Society of Austin questioned the openness of the process that led to the expansion plans. Shortly after the meeting, the SPB canceled that effort.

Following the TSA Board's adoption of its resolution a few days later, James Nader, FAIA, chair of the Historic Resources Committee, said, "The resolution expressed our gratitude for the decision that the State Preservation Board made to remove this issue from consideration given the broadness of the negative response to their planning as it has been revealed. Furthermore, we have made our support known to the SPB for their wisdom in selecting thoroughly quali-

fied member firms to develop the preservation planning for the reconstruction of the Governor's Mansion. The reason we decided it was important to respond with this resolution at this juncture was to not only join with and support our preservation partners, but to assure that, if and when this issue ever erupted again, our position would be clear. We just might have given pause to the notion that significant impact to the public's property can be implemented without input from that public."

He added that TSA's leadership "believed it was important for us to respond to the confluence of requests for involvement from those both within and without our organization." Nader also said the action by the Board represented TSA's objective as expressed in its newly adopted mission statement to be "the voice for Texas architecture, supporting the creation of safe, beautiful, sustainable environments." The new mission statement, he said, "infers that our advocacy mandate is now expanding beyond that of working on behalf of our members' professional interest to a much broader involvement on behalf of the built environment."

T A S T A F F



SMU Unveils Bush Library Design

DALLAS In November, officials of Southern Methodist University unveiled the design by Robert A.M. Stern Architects for the George W. Bush Presidential Center. Groundbreaking is scheduled to take place later this year on the project envisioned by Stern as a modernist complement to SMU's red-brick Georgian character. Set on a 23.11-acre site, the complex—containing an archive, a museum, and a policy institute—is expected to cost \$250 million to construct.

The landscape design by Matthew Urbanski, ASLA, of Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates in New York, is intended to function as an urban park that will engage a broad range of users, including visitors to the library and people attending special event there, as well as students, faculty, and staff of SMU, and residents of University Park, the community that surrounds the campus. Landscape features will include prairie grasses and seasonal wildflowers, with areas planted as savannah and woodlands. Designed to provide habitats for several native species of butterflies, birds, and other wildlife, the grounds will also provide numerous spaces for events and performances in an outdoor amphitheater.

Both the building and the landscaping are expected to achieve LEED platinum certification through the use of sustainable design strategies. The building will use locally sourced building materials, including several types of Texas limestone and stained pecan interior paneling, and solar panels for hot water. Native landscaping will reduce irrigation and a storm-water management system will collect surface

runoff and roof rainwater and provide half of the needed irrigation.

The building and landscape are integrated, with numerous links between indoor and outdoor spaces. Visitors to the museum will enter the building through Freedom Hall, a large and light-filled space containing temporary exhibit space, a ceremonial courtyard, and a café. Among the museum's permanent exhibits will be a replica of the Oval Office as it existed during the tenure of the forty-third U.S. president, with an adjacent outdoor Texas Rose Garden standing in for the garden at the White House. The institute portion of the complex will house a conference center with 364-seat auditorium, numerous offices, and a multi-function presidential suite. The presidential archives will hold official documents and artifacts of the Bush administration available to the public for research.

At the public unveiling of the project on Nov. 12, former President Bush said, "I applaud the work of Robert Stern and Michael Van Valkenburgh in designing a building and landscape that will capture the dignity of the office of the Presidency, while at the same time being warm and welcoming to visitors." In his remarks, SMU President R. Gerald Turner said, "The George W. Bush Presidential Center reflects a unique design that is appropriate in representing the first U.S. president of the twenty-first century. At the same time, it reflects major components of SMU's Collegiate Georgian architectural tradition of nearly 100 years. As a modern expression of our heritage, this facility will be a welcome addition to the stately buildings and grounds that make the SMU campus a special place for learning."

TA STAFF

Exhibit: *Land Art of the Southwest*

Texas Tech University College of Architecture and the Louise Hopkins Underwood Center for the Arts are co-sponsoring the exhibition of student work that documents the forces both natural and man-made that shape our contemporary landscapes. The project seeks to expand the definition of Land Art, a land-based art movement also known as Earthworks launched in the 1960s in which artists create works that interact with specific landscapes. Information available at www.landarts.org. THRU MARCH 7

TSA Seeks Program Ideas

The Texas Society of Architects/AIA is soliciting ideas for programs for its annual convention, scheduled Oct. 14-16 in San Antonio. The meeting's theme is "Purpose." The Call for Programs is posted on the TSA Web site at www.texasarchitect.org. Submittal deadline is MARCH 22

DAF Continues Lecture Series

The Dallas Architecture Forum continues its annual lecture series with Rafael Viñoly, FAIA, speaking in March. His best-known projects include the Tokyo International Forum, the Kimmel Symphony Center in Philadelphia, the Samsung Tower in Seoul, and Jazz at Lincoln Center. Access more information at www.dallasarchitectureforum.org. MARCH 25

Gulf Coast Green 2010

AIA Houston's Committee on the Environment hosts its annual Gulf Coast Green. This year's theme is "Reframing Our Built Environment." Three general topics will frame the discussions—the Business of Green, Renovating the Future, and the Geography of Change. Information available via www.aiahouston.org. APRIL 15-16

THC Spotlights Houston's Heritage

Make plans to network, learn new skills, and enjoy the sights and sounds of Houston by attending the Texas Historical Commission's 2010 Annual Historic Preservation Conference, sponsored in association with Preservation Texas. Tours will highlight the city's Art Deco heritage, its mid-century modern structures, and the San Jacinto Battlefield. The conference brochure is posted at www.thc.state.tx.us. APRIL 22-24

Design Practice Academy at UTA

The UT Arlington Design Practice Academy is a series of informative events, lectures, panel, and workshops that focus on topics useful to young professionals in the design professions. For more information, visit www.uta.edu/architecture. APRIL 26



Belo Center for New Media

Following a competition among 15 firms, a new 120,000-sf Belo Center for New Media is being designed by Lawrence Group Architects for the University of Texas at Austin. Serving as a northwest gateway to the campus, the building will expand facilities for the College of Communication. The project, designed in adherence to the Pelli campus master plan, will reference the modernist expression of the adjacent School of Communication (designed by Ford Powell Carson). A plaza, featuring indigenous plantings at the building's entry, will link the new building both visually and functionally to the original College of Communication campus across the street. The programmatic aspects of the project include facilities for the schools of journalism and advertising, offices for the dean and administrative staff, as well as a 300-seat auditorium and numerous classrooms and lecture halls. In addition, the Belo Center will house new operations for KUT, the university's public radio station. The project, slated for completion in 2012, is designed to meet standards for LEED Silver certification.

International Butterfly Park

Known internationally as a prime spot for observing the annual migration of butterflies, the town of Mission in the Lower Rio Grande Valley has been the home of the North American Butterfly Association for six years. The nonprofit is dedicated to increasing knowledge of butterflies through field observation and educational exhibits. On Jan. 24, the group broke ground on its 100-acre property to build the International Butterfly Park. The project will replace trailers with a Visitor Pavilion that includes an exhibit hall, reception area, gift shop, conference center, and offices for staff. Designed by Wendy Evans Joseph and Chris Cooper of WEJ Architecture in New York City as an enclosed extension of the outdoor gardens, the pavilion will encompass 4,400 sq. ft. within a masonry exterior, a timber roof, and epoxy/concrete floors. Philadelphia-based Andropogon Associates is developing the site design with water conservation strategies, shaded environments, and plantings to attract hundreds of butterfly species. The project is scheduled to be completed in October, in time for butterfly season.



UNT Business Leadership Building

The new Business Leadership Building by Polshek Partnership Architects at the University of North Texas in Denton represents UNT's pursuit of green standards as outlined in the American College & University Presidents' Climate Commitment. Expected to achieve Gold LEED certification, the 180,000-sf facility is designed to accommodate up to 8,000 students (replacing one meant for less than 2,000) and will create a high-tech environment for integrating students with business leaders and entrepreneurs. As UNT President Gretchen M. Bataille stated: "Our new building will provide our students and faculty with a technology-fueled environment that will support their efforts to learn and build local and global partnerships." The four-story building will feature a planted roof, an Internet café, numerous study and tutoring rooms, and more than 15,000 square feet of classroom space equipped for videoconferences. Construction on the project, funded by \$70 million in donations and Legislature-approved revenue bonds began in December, with completion slated for June 2011.

LRGV Showcases Heritage

Conference tour highlights recent efforts to save previously neglected sites

by STEPHEN FOX

IN CONJUNCTION WITH ITS ANNUAL Building Communities Conference held in September, the Lower Río Grande Valley chapter of the AIA sponsored a daylong tour that highlighted preservation projects in and around Brownsville. Drizzle and unseasonably cool temperatures did not dampen the spirits of architectural sightseers as they examined a range of nineteenth- and twentieth-century sites.

Because rain rendered as impassable the unpaved road to one planned destination, chapter executive director Carmen Pérez García prevailed on Brownsville architect Calvin Walker, AIA, to escort tour participants through the Immaculate Conception Cathedral in downtown Brownsville. Walker's firm, Walker & Pérez, collaborated with Austin architects Volz & Associates and Sparks Engineering on an assessment of the cathedral in 2005.

Immaculate Conception, built between 1856 and 1859, was designed by the Rev. Pierre-Yves Kéralum, a French-born architect who came to Texas in 1852 as a missionary priest with members of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate. Walker pointed out—with added commentary by Brownsville architect Roberto Ruiz, AIA, and Port Isabel architect Manuel Hinojosa, AIA—the conservation problems that Immaculate Conception shares with other nineteenth-



century border buildings constructed of soft, locally made brick. Moisture migration from roof leaks, infiltration of the walls, and rising damp are chronic problems. Ensuring that roofs are securely anchored to timber roof structures is another concern. Yet the cathedral—repainted externally for the celebration of its 150th anniversary in 2009—was impressive.

From Immaculate Conception, tour participants walked a block to the historic City Market House in Market Square to visit the office of Peter L. Goodman, manager of Brownsville's

downtown development district, and José A. Gavito, Jr., the city's heritage officer. They discussed the changing nature of preservation in Brownsville and current efforts to expand preservation awareness from the original townsites to the city's twentieth-century neighborhoods.

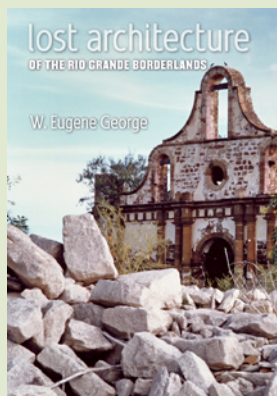
Despite steady rain, the group set off for Santa María, 30 miles upriver from Brownsville. In the early 1880s, the owner of Rancho Santa María conveyed property to the Diocese of Brownsville for construction of a brick church dedicated to Our Lady of Visitation, completed in 1882. According to Oblate historian Father Edward A. Kennedy, Our Lady of Visitation (shown at left) was built from a design for a rural church prepared by Father Kéralum before his death in 1872. Our Lady of Visitation is no longer a functioning parish church. Neglect and vandalism have taken a serious toll on the small building, as do the vibrations of semi-trailer trucks passing just a few yards away on U.S. 281. Architect Roberto Ruiz, AIA, explained the interventions carried out by Brownsville conservation specialist Lawrence V. Lof, who has erected timber shoring inside the church to counteract the decades-long effects of roof leaks, rising damp, crumbling mortar, and lack of maintenance.

continued on page 73

'Lost' in the Borderlands

Austin architect W. Eugene George's classic work, *Lost Architecture of the Río Grande Borderlands*, has returned to print in a handsome new edition.

In this update of the 1975 original edition, George amplifies his history and analysis of ranchsteads that lay near the Río Grande in Zapata County and Starr County with new research. These river ranches were first documented between 1948 and 1953 by archeologists Alex D. Krieger, Jack T. Hughes, Jack Humphries, Edward B. Jelks, and Joe F. Cason for the National Park Service's River Basins Survey during the construction of International Falcón Dam. The dam impounded the river in a 115,000-acre reservoir that submerged the ranchlands in 1953. In 1975, George used survey field notes and photographs deposited at the Texas Archeological Research Laboratory to prepare architectural drawings of many



of these sites for the 88-page book published by the Texas Historical Commission. George's precise and sensitive draftsmanship and the haunting profiles of stone ranch houses powerfully conveyed the loss experienced by residents of the area in the early 1950s.

To his 1975 account George has added color photographs of Guerrero Viejo in Tamaulipas, the eighteenth-century Mexican town partially submerged by Falcón Reservoir, and a greatly expanded account of the architectural-historical context of the Texan-Tamaulipas border drawing on his research in the region, which began in 1961. A new and moving foreword by Ricardo Paz Treviño recounts the days before the water inundated the Treviño family's hometown and the subsequent pilgrimages to honor ancestors whose graves were rendered inaccessible by the man-made deluge.

STEPHEN FOX

Lost Architecture of the Río Grande Borderlands by W. Eugene George, FAIA, is available from Texas A&M University Press.



Fading Music

Relics of Central European immigration, community halls are threatened by disuse

by STEVE DEAN

(top) Appelt's Hill Gun Club, built in 1909 and located near Hallettsville in Lavaca County, features a gable fronted cruciform plan with two side 'round' apses. (right) Interior T-pole of the Nordheim Shooting Club, built c. 1927 in DeWitt County, supports the immense and complex roof structure. A simple system of ropes and pulleys open and close the cupola windows to allow air circulation. Both halls are still used for local community gatherings.

IN MANY SMALL TOWNS ACROSS CENTRAL Texas, settled along the well-worn paths of nineteenth-century Czech, Polish, and German immigration routes, one of the most prominent landmarks is the dance and/or community hall. These émigrés from Central Europe brought with them traditional, artisanal building crafts and, just as importantly, a powerful desire to reproduce and maintain their cultural heritage, from language to vernacular architectural styles. That desire is reflected in the halls they built to house cultural institutions and practices central to their community (*Gesang Vereins* or *Saenger Halls*), to hone their marksmanship (*Shuetzen Vereins*), to build and maintain their bodies through exercise (*Turn Vereins*), to organize community insurance associations (SPJST halls), to practice their faith (KJT halls), as well as to provide a locale for other organizations related to agriculture and so on. These halls were as important to community life as court-

houses or churches, and consequently were often one of the first buildings constructed in the new townships.

The halls were erected with building techniques and skills learned in the old country but adapted for Texas' sometimes harsh environment. This meant, for example, an emphasis on windows and cupolas to keep air circulating and to facilitate the venting of heat through the roof.

Cat Spring's Agricultural Society Hall (*Landwirth Schaftlide Verein*) was built by German immigrants at the turn of the twentieth century as a 12-sided hall. Located in rural Austin County at the junction of FM 949 and FM 2187, Cat Springs' building is one of the rare "round" halls constructed by a renowned local craftsman named Jochim Hintz.

Just east of Cat Springs is another example of Hintz's mastery, the Peters Schuetzen Verein Hall, an eight-sided "round" Shooting Club

TOP LEFT PHOTO BY BEN MOUSH; BOTTOM RIGHT PHOTO BY ANNA MOO

Hall built in 1900 in Peters Community on County Road 370 just off State Highway 36 south of Bellville in Austin County. Although Peters Hall was built for shooting competitions, dancing eventually became its primary function. Dancing was an important social practice for German residents, as for all of the Central European settlers, and several generations of families typically attended regular events that enacted and affirmed the community's stability and continuity.

The Millheim Harmonie Verein (Singing Hall) Society was organized in 1873 and built its first hall in 1874, the same year the community was established. Originally called Muehlheim ("Home of the Mill"), Millheim is located on FM 1088 just south of Bellville in Austin County. The area had previously been part of the original Spanish land grant to Stephen F. Austin in 1823. Like Millheim, the surrounding settlements of New Ulm, Industry, and Cat Spring were founded by mostly German immigrants in the 1830s and 1840s. As was often the case with early halls, Millheim hall's patrons benefitted from a bowling alley and a local brewery located on the same property. Millheim's hall was the location for the Singing Society, Agricultural Society, political rallies, barbecues, Maifests, Christmas tree festivals, New Year's parties, masquerade balls, and Leap Year dances. It is located on FM 1088 just south of Bellville in Austin County.

Historic structures such as those in Cat Spring, Peters, and Millheim are only a few of more than 80 halls I have documented in adjacent Austin and Fayette counties. Surprisingly, there has been very little research on Texas' dance halls although many have been decimated over the years by natural disasters, neglect, urban sprawl, and other maladies. Only recently has there been any development of interest in and knowledge about them. One of the driving forces in that interest is Texas Dance Hall Preservation (www.texasdancehall.org), a nonprofit group with the mission of saving historic Texas dance halls and the music and culture that still center around them.

Texas is slowly losing these iconic buildings. In the last two years, two major and active halls have burned down: Gruenau Hall, located on County Road 2980 just a few miles northeast of Yorktown in DeWitt County; and Bill Mraz Hall in Houston on W. 34th Street. Even though Gruenau Hall was insured, the coverage was not adequate for replicating the building in its

original form, but the owners have made great strides in reproducing the general appearance of the original. Many organizations struggle with the rising costs of repairs, new construction and ever-escalating insurance rates. Additionally, many of the halls tend to lose their most loyal constituencies to age. Their children and grandchildren, especially those born after the 1950s, typically spend their leisure time away from dance halls and live in communities that no longer use the halls for centralized social functions. As a result, rural depopulation and changing cultural mores have left the halls without the populations that animated them from the mid-nineteenth to the late-twentieth centuries.

Apart from the architectural and historical rationales for the continued care and preservation of Texas dance halls, it is evident that they have also been incubators for a rich culture of popular music styles, the diverse forms of "Texas Music" as it is known around the world. From the earliest nineteenth-century brass

bands, string bands, and fiddle-oriented ranch dance ensembles, a unique mix of musical genres and styles was nurtured in these halls and cross-pollinated with the state's varied ethnic cultures. Strains of German polkas were assimilated in the music of the Tejano community, producing the indigenous form we now know as Conjunto music. Later in the 1930s, when string band leaders such as Bob Wills or Milton Brown started traveling through these halls, they picked up influences as diverse as Dixieland jazz, Mexican boleros and rancheros, and cowboy and Tin Pan Alley pop styles to create another Texas indigenous music known as Western Swing. With Texas' vast landscape, bands and musicians could earn a living without ever leaving the territory. By the 1920s there was a dance hall in virtually every small town or village.

Dance halls provided the necessary contexts and audiences for the development of unique "Texas" sounds and thus helped to propel this music into the forefront of the rapidly-developing twentieth-century commercial music industry. From early blues and Bob Wills, the entire country and world has known the special sounds that emanate from the dance halls "Down There in Texas." Of course, many of the legendary names of mid- and late-twentieth-century American pop music — from Bob Wills and T-Bone Walker to Buddy Holly, Roy Orbison, Buck Owens, George Jones, Willie Nelson, Stevie Ray Vaughan, and George Strait — honed their craft in these splendid halls.

Notable "outsiders" also developed their musical careers in these halls. Hank Williams played his final dates in Texas at the tiny McDonna Hall and at the more established Skyline in Austin. Elvis Presley literally learned to perform in Texas, with his early career consisting primarily of touring the Texas halls from Lubbock to the Louisiana border.

In several ways and on several levels, dance halls are crucial elements of Texas' cultural heritage. Courthouses, lighthouses, ranches, and other historical landmarks have been preserved and have become the object of study and tourism-related development. Now, perhaps, the time has finally come to put Texas dance halls in the spotlight for their long and overwhelming contribution to Texas culture and its mystique. As Bob Wills sang, "I Can't Get Enough of Texas."

Steve Dean is a co-founder of Texas Dance Hall Preservation.



The Importance of Public Space

In today's cities, such as Dallas, private hands shape public places

by KEVIN W. SLOAN, ASLA



(above) Crowds thronged the Oct. 19 openings of the Winspear Opera House and Wyly Theatre. The projects are the latest additions to the AT&T Performing Arts Center (formerly the Dallas Center for the Performing Arts), located at the west end of the Arts District.

(opposite page, top to bottom) The diagrams demonstrate the evolution of the

Arts District from the 1982 Sasaki Plan's recommendation for rows of cypress to define Flora Street, the district's central spine, to the actual development of the ground plane. The space-positive diagram in the center shows how the tree-lined street expands around the PAC. The figure-ground drawing depicts the District's built components.

IN PREMODERN CITIES, THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE PUBLIC DOMAIN – the temples, cathedrals, monuments and the deliberately shaped spaces around them – conferred status to citizens and communicated authority to the outside world. Central Park and Bryant Park in New York City; Golden Gate Park, Market Street and the Embarcadero in San Francisco; and the venerated Emerald Necklace in Boston are public spaces in more recent cities. In the best examples of all worlds, cities are continuous networks of humanized space.

The public domain is not a distant idea. As recently as the early twentieth century, the architecture and urban planning team of Werner Hegemann and Elbert Peets noted, in their seminal text *American Vitruvius: An Architect's Handbook on Civic Art*, "The fundamental unit of architectural design is the city, not the individual building." Never meant to suggest that a single individual can design an entire city, it reinforced the time-honored notion that any new building must accomplish its own prerogatives and be, as Louis Kahn wrote, a "donor to the street." Cities are accomplished or unmade one building and space at a time.

In less than a century, this sensibility has all but vanished. Contemporary architecture is a free-for-all where individual projects and individual designers vie for primacy and virtually any building program, ranging from an opera house to a country house, can be conferred objective importance. The overall result is chaos and the appearance of a historically unprecedented city form. What might be called the "metropolitan city" has appeared so rapidly that it has no namable parts, no public realm, nor any clear purpose. With public space largely edited from its proliferation, for whom or what are these cities built? The city of humanized space has been replaced by cities of real estate.

As to how stakeholders might transform the metropolitan city, proponents of the New Urbanism attack the problem with excitable rhetoric and their conviction that the solution is in European models and the canonical examples of early American town planning. Architects of a more contemporary mind see the historical precedents as anathema to invention, and remain steadfast that, given time, the modern world will solve its own problems. Other sympathies are either ambivalent or construct a curious rationale that the metropolitan city is just fine—a uniquely "American urbanism." These viewpoints hold some truth, but none grasp the complete picture.

While "center" is a symbolic reference and not so much an urban type, the AT&T Performing Arts Center resembles a campus or world exposition where radically different buildings are held in suspension by a unifying landscape. Shaped collaboratively by Foster + Partners of London and OMA

of New York, the site plan for the center refined the 1982 Sasaki Master Plan for the Dallas Arts District, first by switching the locations of the Winspear Opera House and the Wyly Theater and then placing them in a more liberal relationship to the street.

Although the Sasaki plan prescribed a Texas version of a Parisian boulevard for Flora Street, the main street of the Arts District, the layout of the AT&T PAC produces a broad, expansive area where buildings withdraw from Flora Street and defer to the urban landscape to provide cohesion and public identity.

Designed by landscape architect Michel Desvigne of Paris, concrete paving and large turf panels establish an orthometric ground plane intended to extend the Sasaki grid throughout the Center. In counterpoint to the gridded surface, trees of varying species and size are casually disposed throughout. The rejuvenated Annette Strauss Artist Square holds much promise for enhancing urban life in the Arts District, but with sections still under construction, the ultimate character of the plaza is unknown.

In his iconoclastic volume, *S, M, L, XL*, Rem Koolhaas, lead designer of the Wyly Theater, suggests that, given the disarray of the contemporary city, architects may have to disregard context. While Koolhaas may be correct in his resignation that the situation is too far gone, ignoring context altogether runs the risk of accidentally producing unintended associations that could diminish all good intentions of an original work.

As part of the Wyly's thesis to organize the program vertically versus horizontally, a large dustpan-shaped plaza descends from Flora Street to a lower entry level. From the below-grade lobby, theatergoers ascend one flight via a main interior stair where they arrive dramatically into the performance space — at the same level as the ground plane of the surrounding city — with expansive views of the cityscape just beyond the theater's glass walls.

A few feet away and diagonal to the Wyly is another sloped plaza on Leonard Street—the multi-lane entry ramp to an underground parking garage of the Meyerson Symphony Hall. With the sloped garage entry nearly the same size and slope of the Wyly forecourt, how is an observer not to associate the two in some kind of referential way and what message might be inferred?

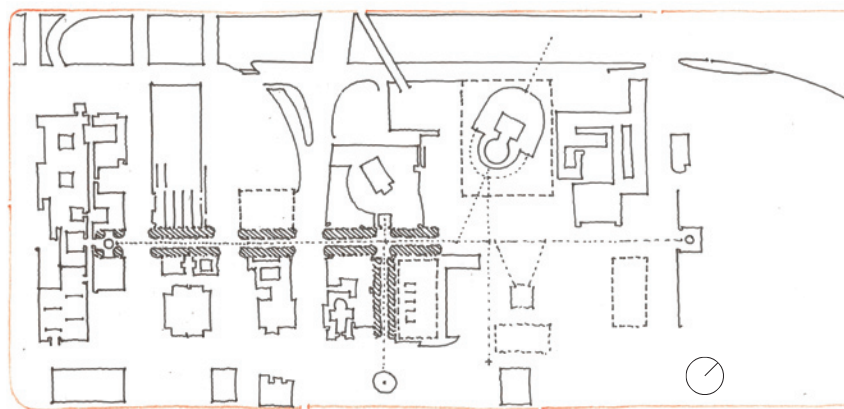
Observers, drawn to savor the buildings individually, might overlook the remarkable civic achievement of the Winspear Opera House by Foster + Partners. Never before in the history of Dallas—a city made almost entirely of private spaces by private hands—has such a monumental public space existed as is created by the building's immense canopy. An instant and unmistakable icon, it also clearly defines a space—a great public room around the performance hall—by using an overhead structure to accomplish what was historically defined by the surrounding facades of an urban fabric. It is intriguing to note that it took an architect from the cold and rainy climate of London to pounce upon the thermal problem of Texas and transform it into a public architecture whose message is comprehensible to most observers.

In a recent collection of essays titled “The Endless City,” a short piece by Koolhaas outlines that architecture is largely without any real answers or any new theory about how to contend with the stupendous problems of the contemporary city. However, unassisted by new theory, the AT&T Performing Arts Center represents an enormous step in the right direction for Dallas. But it is just one step, and more must be taken to establish a permanent and stable urbanism within metropolitan Dallas. Yet, its

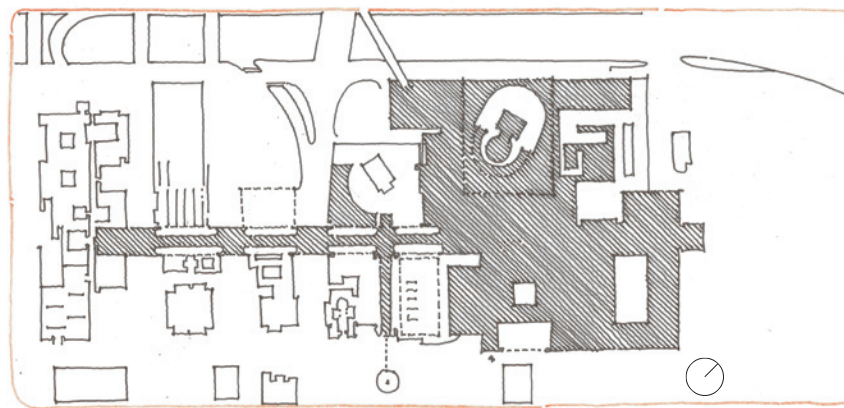
goals of establishing culture and architecture have proved to be smashing successes.

In Dallas, the first leg of a long journey is completed. Along with other cities and suburbs that are suddenly realizing their future may be threatened by the problems of an untested urban pattern, Dallas is rethinking the problem in terms of a new kind of civic project. Although it is always intriguing and necessary to debate all issues of architecture, the problem of the metropolitan city may be *the* architectural problem of this era.

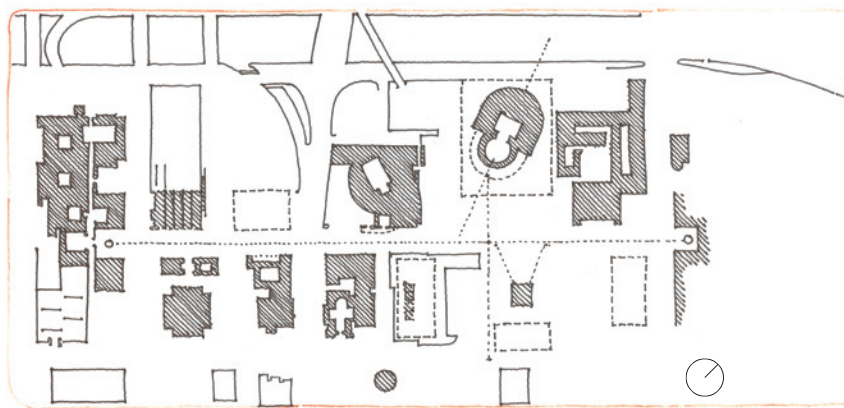
The writer practices landscape architecture and urban planning in Dallas.



Sasaki Plan (1982)



Dallas Arts District (2009)



Dallas Arts District (2009)

PROJECT Dee & Charles Wylly Theatre, Dallas

CLIENT AT&T Performing Arts Center

DESIGN ARCHITECT REX/OMA

ARCHITECT OF RECORD Kendall/Heaton Associates

DESIGN TEAM REX: Joshua-Prince Ramus; Erez Ella; Vincent Bandy; OMA: Rem Koolhaas; Kendall/Heaton: Rex Wooldridge; Pat Ankney; Vincent Nguyen; James Benton

CONTRACTOR McCarthy Building Companies

CONSULTANTS Transsolar Energietechnik (MEP/FP); Cosentini Associates (MEP, building controls, security design, IT); URS (as LOPEZGARCIA GROUP) (civil); Magnusson Klemencic Associates (structural); Theatre Projects Consultants (theatre); DHV BV (acoustical); McGuire Associates (ADA); Donnell Consultants (cost); FRONT (curtain wall, exterior envelope); Quinze & Milan (furniture); 2x4 (graphics); Tillotson Design Associates (lighting); HKA Elevator Consulting (vertical transportation)

PHOTOGRAPHERS Iwan Baan; Tim Hursley



Drama Machine

by STEPHEN SHARPE



Stacked and compact, with its complex inner workings tantalizingly hidden behind a shimmering veil of aluminum tubes, the Dee and Charles Wyly Theatre appears to pose aloofly in the midst of the Dallas Arts District. The Wyly indeed seems coolly detached from its nearest neighbors, including two distinguished buildings by Pritzker Prize-winning architects. Conceived in part by another member of the exclusive Pritzker club, this 12-story metal clad cube commands center stage as a machine for the theatrical arts.

Rem Koolhaas (Pritzker honoree in 2000) and Joshua Prince-Ramus, enabled by enlightened patrons, designed the Wyly to function like no other traditional theater—vertically, with its main performance space at ground level and almost all support facilities placed at the building's upper tiers. This daring experiment in the logistics of stagecraft exemplifies Koolhaas's intellectual approach to re-interpreting an established building type from the ground up.

As intriguing as the architectural response to the Wyly's sophisticated program is the backstory that traces the project's lineage, beginning with Koolhaas and his OMA principal in charge, Prince-Ramus, who subsequently split from OMA and opened his own shop, REX. Prince-Ramus continued with the project separately from Koolhaas. A full account of the project's arc of trajectory, detailing its conceptual authorship and the handoff of construction documents, has yet to be published. Maybe there's no mystery to reveal, or perhaps with all the principal actors, including the locals whose behind-the-scenes efforts to fund and build the Wyly, apparently pleased with the completed project—as well as with the enthusiastic reception it has garnered in the architectural media—no one is particularly eager to upstage the star attraction.

The Wyly's innovative scheme demands much of theatergoers, asking more than just the customary suspension of disbelief during the performance but also to dispel any perceptions of luxurious comfort. The entry sequence calls for audience members to descend a sloping plaza either via a zigzag path or

(preceding spread) The Wyly's north facade reveals its main theater space set below its curtain-like skin of aluminum tubes, some tapered at points to allow views within and without. The lobby below features bare, yet surprisingly elegant, fluorescent-tube lighting.

(this spread, from far right to left) The theater allows three distinct stage configurations to accommodate all types of performances. The rooftop terrace, embellished with artificial turf, displays the building's massive structural columns. The nine-story 'theater machine' envelops 90,000 square feet stacks 'front of house' functions below stage level and 'back of house' above.







a slightly steeper set of steps along the side wall to reach the basement-level lobby (actually the upper of two below-grade floors). Once inside, they experience their first close-up of several austere accoutrements that herald the architects' bold conceits for this machine: the elegant lighting surprisingly consists of fluorescent tubes hanging vertically from the polished concrete ceiling, the same surface treatment used on all the lobby's floor and walls save for the long facade of mostly glass that opens to the entry ramp. The lens of this transparent wall focuses views north toward the Winspear Opera House, its high canopy extending beyond its vivid red elliptical theater chamber, and the charcoal-finished brick massing of the arts magnet Booker T. Washington High School, two other recent additions to the Arts District. From this below-grade space, the ascent to the stage level requires queuing up to climb the narrow stair that is fancifully lined on both sides with fine-gauge metallic mesh that adheres to magnetic panels placed behind—a whimsical distraction that helps offset the lobby's elemental harshness by inviting patrons to playfully swirl patterns and smooth wrinkles in the tactile material.

Climbing to the theater level, the payoff is worth the efforts imposed by switch-back ramps and a restrictive stairway, as ticketholders emerge to find themselves surrounded by the cityscape of downtown Dallas and the newly invigorated Arts District. Arriving in this circuitous manner heightens the experience, with the revelation taking hold that the Wily's inner sanctum is itself a stage on which audience members themselves play to the city beyond. Simultaneously, they observe the goings-on at street level through three walls of transparent glass. While black drapes enshroud the theater chamber during performances, the spectacle continues in full view after the final curtain call.

Also at the theater level is also where the architecture's internal—and gloriously unconventional—structure becomes visible from both inside and outside the building's nine stories.

Exposed at various points at the perimeter are six massive poured-in-place concrete columns—two rising vertically, and four others angled and joined as pairs—that work in concert with a mid-height steel belt truss to hold up the 132-foot-tall tower. Such skillful engineering negates the need for interior columns, an economy of structure that minimizes obstructions to sightlines in the theater. Again, there's off-stage dramatic artistry in the powerful supporting roles played by these visually arresting elements, and the building coyly allows glimpses at intervals as the columns extend upward.

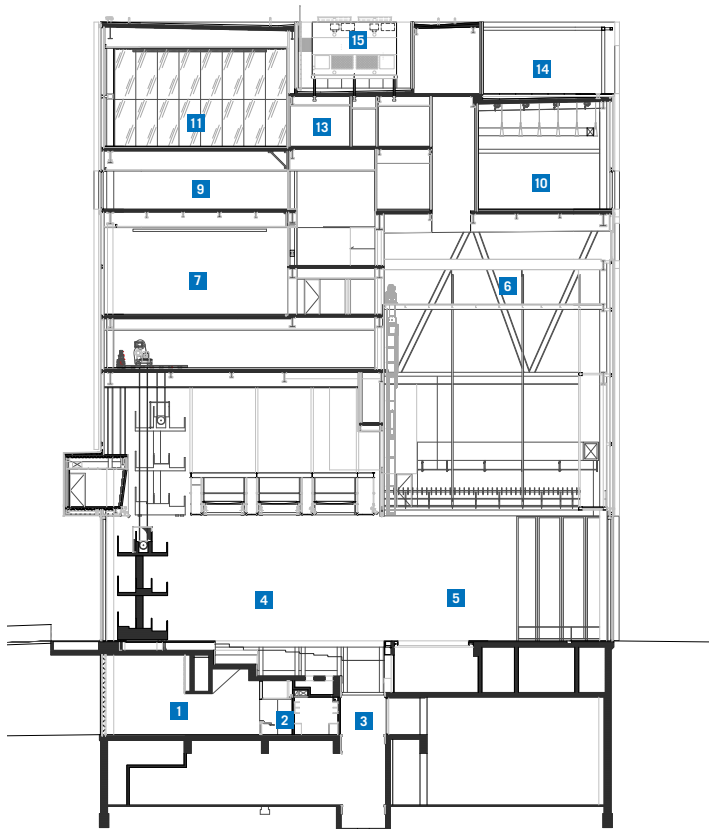
The point of all this architectural finesse is to enhance the stagecraft of the Wyly, to create a theater that operates with machine-like precision while expanding the artistic director's options. Specifically, Koolhaas and Prince-Ramus were asked to design a multi-form theater, one that could be rearranged quickly and inexpensively for at least three types of stage configurations—flat-floor, proscenium, and thrust. The work can be accomplished by a small crew of stagehands in only a few hours. Balconies are moveable and seating wagons can be shifted or stored away.

Speaking to reporters during the Wyly's media debut in mid-October, Prince-Ramus described its flexibility: "So now we've actually created a kind of theater machine that allows them, without requiring a lot of operational budget, to move between three configurations as well as any other configuration the artistic director might conceive of, as well as an auditorium that is very, very malleable in terms of scenic alteration." Continuing, the architect used a three-piece model of the building, with the pieces arranged horizontally on a table top. Then he arranged them vertically, saying, "...by stacking the building we were able to open up the perimeter of the auditorium, which is a very unique thing. Historically, in order to meet the acoustic requirements, in terms of keeping sound out, [and] light requirements, auditoriums are usually built behind two feet of concrete. The technology has advanced enough now that you can actually build a very, very high



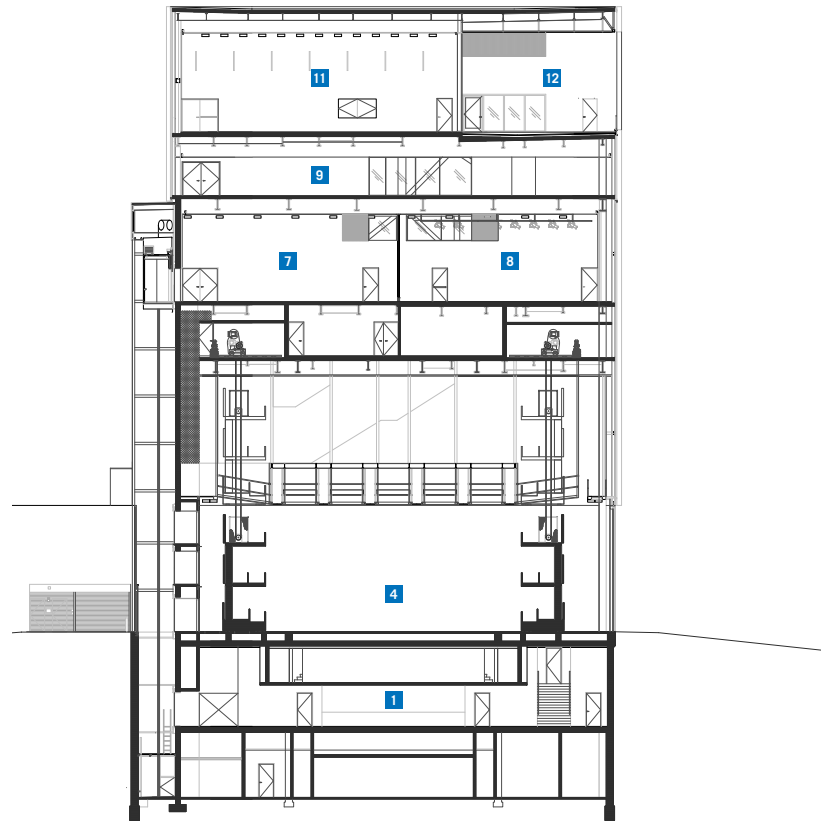
(opposite page) Balconies and floor seating can be reconfigured within hours by a small crew of stagehands.

(top and bottom) Stacking the Wyly's internal workings created numerous views into adjacent spaces, such as the costume shop as seen from the education center. The conference room is positioned for peeks into the studio theater.



NORTH/SOUTH SECTION

- 1 LOBBY
- 2 BOX OFFICE
- 3 ORCHESTRA LIFT
- 4 SEATING, ORCHESTRA & PARTERRE
- 5 MAIN STAGE
- 6 GRID IRON
- 7 PATRONS LOUNGE/REHEARSAL 3
- 9 OFFICES
- 10 COSTUME SHOP
- 11 REHEARSAL 1
- 13 STAGE MANAGEMENT
- 14 BALCONY TERRACE
- 15 COOLING TOWER



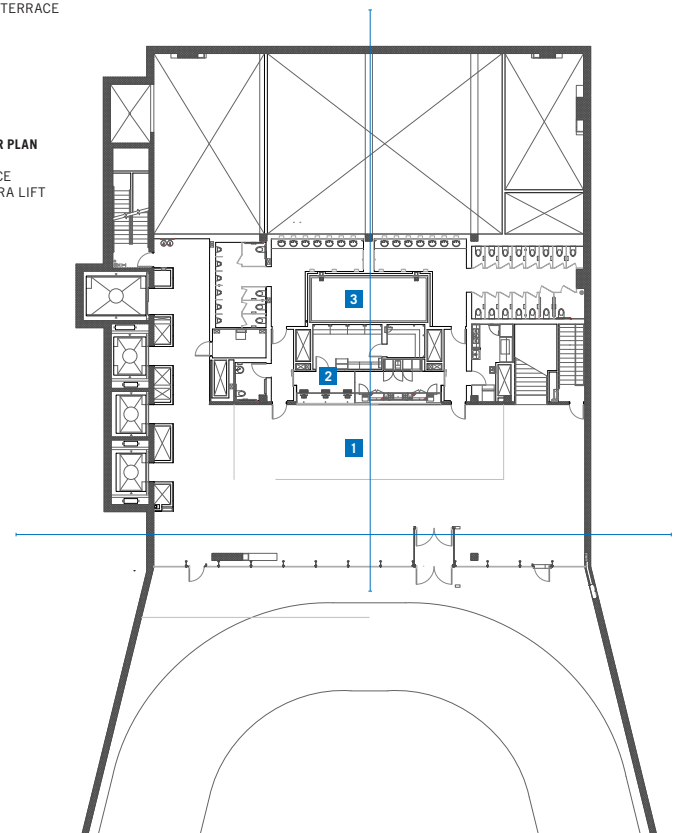
EAST/WEST SECTION

- 1 LOBBY
- 4 SEATING, ORCHESTRA & PARTERRE
- 7 PATRONS LOUNGE/REHEARSAL 3
- 8 REHEARSAL 2
- 9 OFFICES
- 11 REHEARSAL 1
- 12 BALCONY TERRACE



SECOND FLOOR PLAN

- 1 LOBBY
- 2 BOX OFFICE
- 3 ORCHESTRA LIFT



RESOURCES UNIT PAVERS: Hanover Architectural Products (Dee Brown); RETAINING WALLS: Craig Olden; SITE, STREET, MALL FURNISHINGS: Marshalls, Landscape Forms; PLANTING ACCESSORIES: ValleyCrest; GRANITE: Cold Spring Granite (Dee Brown); METAL MATERIALS AND METAL DECKING: W&W Steel; RAILINGS, STAIRS, STEEL SUPPORT FRAMING: American Steel & Aluminum; LUMBER: Mid South Lumber; ARCHITECTURAL WOODWORK: WoodHaus; WATERPROOFING: Polyguard; WATER REPELLENTS: Stego Industries; METAL ROOFING: A. Zahner Company; METAL DOORS: Piper Weatherford (Performance Door); WOOD DOORS: Woodhaus, Dallas Door & Supply; ENTRANCES, METAL WINDOWS, GLAZED CURTAIN WALL: Oak Cliff Mirror & Glass; ALUMINUM TUBE FACADE CLADDING, PIVOT DOORS: Tisi Estructuras Metalicas; RAINSCREEN: A. Zahner Company; INTERIOR METAL PANELS, LIGHTED STAIRWELLS AND HANDRAILS: Total Design Manufacturing; GYPSUM BOARD FRAMING: Facility Construction Services; TILE: DalTile; INDOOR ATHLETIC SURFACING: ProGreen of Texas; FLUID APPLIED FLOORING: PPG; WALL COVERINGS: Rochester Magnets; CARPET: David Foster; FLOORING: PDL Designs; METAL FLOORING: Orozco; SIGNAGE: Environmental Signage Solutions dba ASI Signage Irving; WHEELCHAIR LIFT: Lift Aids; THEATRE SEATING: Moroso; THEATRE EQUIPMENT: SECOA



and very, very secure acoustic enclosure using glass.” The transparent walls also afford the artistic director the freedom to pivot open sections, allowing performers to enter or exit the theater space to serve the script. According to Prince-Ramus, the architects also responded to a request to help the artistic director “get the architecture out of the head of the audience.” The design achieved the objective, he said, “to effectively, to the extent possible, remove the hand of the architect and supplant it with the hand of the artistic director.”

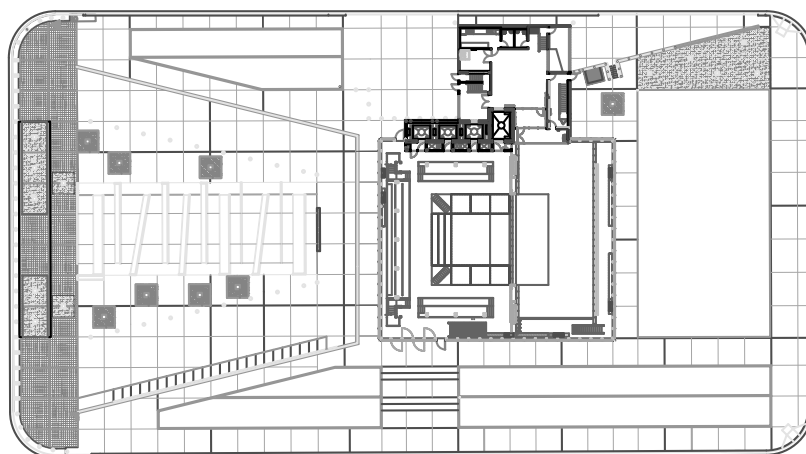
Nonetheless, the architects show their hands in the organization of spaces above the theater, where interior windows open views to adjacent rooms set at a different floor level. Slightly disorienting to the first-time visitor, these internal peeks encourage cross-pollination of ideas among the members of the theatrical troupes.

While the Wyly presents itself as an object that can’t be overlooked on the cityscape, REX/OMA’s rigorous manipulation of structure and space is only fully apparent from within, behind its lustrous metal envelope where the hardware hums and the technicians operate the gadgetry to create art.

Stephen Sharpe is the editor of *Texas Architect*.

A single narrow stair leads from the lobby to the main theater. Sheets of metal mesh line the magnetized stairway walls, a whimsical touch that invites patrons to leave their mark as they ascend to the performance space.

 SITE PLAN



PROJECT Margot and Bill Winspear Opera House, Dallas

CLIENT AT&T Performing Arts Center

DESIGN ARCHITECT Foster and Partners

ARCHITECT OF RECORD Kendall/Heaton Associates

DESIGN TEAM Foster Partners: Norman Foster; Spencer de Gray; James McGrath; Bjorn Polzin; Laszlo Pallagi; Kendall/Heaton: Rex Wooldridge, AIA; Rollic Childers, AIA; Michael Horvath, AIA; Richard Kaul; Erika Bush; Charlton Meyers, AIA

CONTRACTOR Linbeck

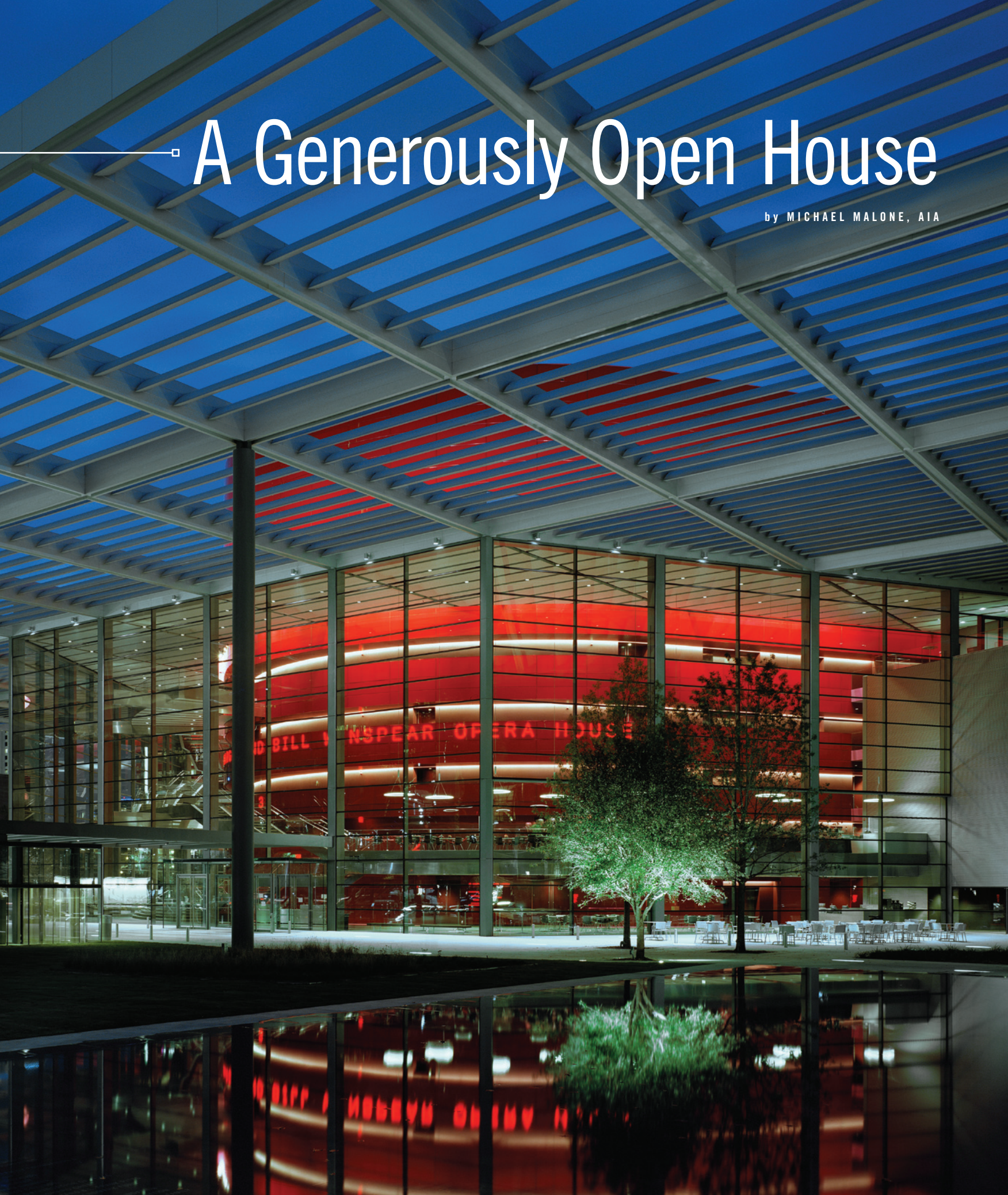
CONSULTANTS Theatre Projects Consultants (theater); Sound Space Design (acoustical); Thornton Tomasetti (structural); Buro Happold (structural and curtain wall design); CHP & Associates (MEP, IT); Battle McCarthy (MEP design); LZA Technology (curtain wall); Claude R. Engle Lighting Consultant (lighting); Engineering Harmonics (sound system); 2x4 (graphics); Cini-Little International (food service); HMA Consulting (security); URS (as LOPEZGARCIA GROUP) (civil); Persohn/Hahn Associates (vertical transportation); Facade Access Consultants (building maintenance); CPP (wind engineering); McGuire Associates (accessibility); Wilson, Ihrig & Associates (sound vibration); Donnell Consultants (cost)

PHOTOGRAPHERS Iwan Baan; Craig D. Blackmon, FAIA; Tim Hursley



A Generously Open House

by MICHAEL MALONE, AIA



If you live in Dallas, you seldom have an opportunity to view the entire city from inside a building. Being predominately horizontal, most of the publicly accessible places that allow bird's-eye views into the city tend to be restaurant dining rooms or bars on top of high-rises (think Reunion Tower). Observed from such a lofty vantage point where the city is laid out like a map or an expansive scale model, it's difficult to get a sense of how you fit into all that urban sprawl. But now, even here at the epicenter of build-to-the-horizon Texas, we are witnessing the beginnings of a building culture that is more urbanistically generous and outward-looking than ever before. This nascent movement is attempting to weave new structures into the existing fabric, which helps us appreciate and navigate the city in which we live.

This refreshing urbanistic quality was introduced to the Dallas Arts District in 1989 by I.M. Pei with his Meyerson Symphony Center, followed in 2003 by Renzo Piano with the Nasher Sculpture Center. More recently, two additions to the Arts District – the Margot and Bill Winspear Opera House and the Dee and Charles Wyly Theater – both have gone a step further by making it concrete and tangible. That these latest two are venues for performance, with controlled environments for productions of music and theater, would not on the surface make them logical examples of outward-looking place making, but in the hands of their architects – each committed to architecture's role as a beacon of culture in a civilized society – its expression is fundamental to their execution. As a result, the city looks great from their lobbies (and in the case of the Wyly, from the theater chamber itself) and feels vibrant, cosmopolitan, and accessible. While both direct patrons' attention outside and toward their surroundings, the Winspear allows views from multiple vantage points through the verticality of its stairs and landings.

(preceding spread) The inviting combination of transparent facade and sheltering canopy draws in visitors to the Winspear Opera House.

(this spread, from far right to left) The glass curtain wall is all that separates the Winspear from the rest of the Arts District. The fixed-louver canopy extends out toward Flora Street to cover the Elaine D. and Charles A. Sammons Park, designed by landscape architect Michel Desvigne. Seen from the esplanade of the Wyly Theatre across Flora Street, the Winspear's red-glass interior drum radiates through the curtain wall.







The Winspear, named for Bill (who died in 2007) and Margot Winspear, was designed by Foster + Partners of London as essentially a glass-box lobby with an elliptical-shaped, red glass-clad hall at its core. A high canopy sheltering the lobby and hall (and extending into the Arts District beyond) creates a kind of front porch that serves as a gathering place for the whole Arts District. Open to suggestions from various constituencies to the need for mitigating the intense Texas sun, Foster acknowledged the climatic reality by designing the monumental shading device that effectively extends the lobby out to the street and welcomes people in. The canopy, an aluminum-clad steel frame with fins at fixed angles that form the primary shade elements, is simultaneously immense and delicate. Though large in scale, the mass is surprisingly unobtrusive, a discrete presence along Flora Street. It brings to mind an umbrella, a sheltering device that defines a space and also constitutes a microclimate.

Hidden beneath the landscaped plaza is the Winspear's extensive parking structure (designed by Good Fulton & Farrell Architects) from which patrons ascend via escalators to the outdoor plaza rather than into the lobby, and they depart the same way—protected from the sun but otherwise open to the elements. An atypical strategy in automobile-oriented Dallas, Lord Norman Foster choreographed the arrival sequence in this manner as a way to acknowledge nature, no matter what the weather, in the transition from car to lobby.

The Winspear's C. Vincent Prothro Lobby is defined by a transparent and minimally detailed glass wall that, like the canopy, is noticeably delicate for a structure so large. The lobby forms a gathering and circulation space that rings the red glass-encased performance hall, with curving stairs and balconies surrounding the hall and providing access to the various levels. The only element to penetrate the canopy is the ruby crown of the distinct lozenge-shaped hall—an appropriate gesture as it is the primary

reason the building exists. Here is the heart of the building, a metaphor emphasized by the rich red glass that sheathes the inner chamber from top to bottom and radiates out to the city through the transparent lobby.

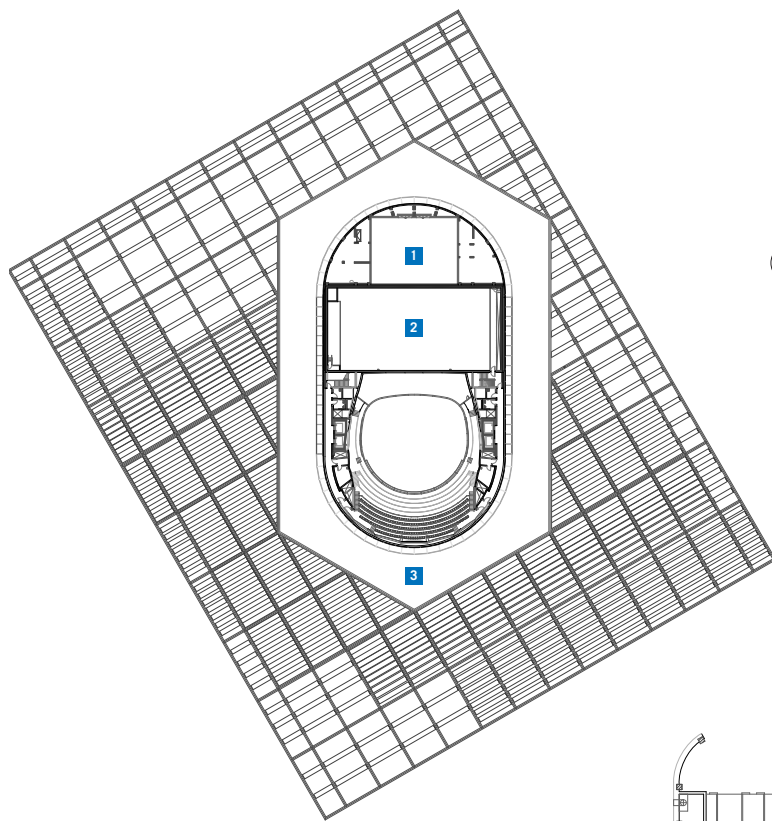
Once inside the lobby, it's all about looking out at the Arts District and everything is glass so as not to disturb the views. The see-through west facade offers a particularly delightful focal point—the Meyerson next door, which has never looked better. Formerly concealed by older structures now demolished, the Meyerson's now-visible east facade serves as a handsome boundary of the plaza. It is fitting to see Pei and Foster side by side here in the Arts District because in many ways Foster is the successor to Pei, the urbane international architect as maker of urban institutions, who rarely missteps and for whom architecture is an optimistic act that will make the world a better (and more beautiful) place. The similarities between the Meyerson and the Winspear are as compelling as the differences, but both buildings place a premium on the experience of inviting people in to look out toward the city.

Foster conceived the Winspear's performance hall as a traditional opera house volume in a horseshoe configuration, with antecedents in Milan's La Scala and the Royal Opera House in London's Covent Garden. Even with 2,200 seats, the hall is surprisingly intimate and designed to bring the audience as close as possible to the action on stage, never more than 85 feet from stage to balcony—or, in the words of AT&T Performing Arts Center CEO Mark Nerenhausen, "the distance from third base to home plate." Four balconies sweep back from the stage in a swirl of gold. The balconies are faced with rippled textured panels finished in actual gold, but the effect is dynamic, not gaudy, certainly not stuffy. The seats and flooring are walnut, rich without being distracting, allowing all the focus to be on the stage and its understated proscenium. At the apex of the hall, the elliptical ceiling features a custom-designed chandelier, a series of fiber-



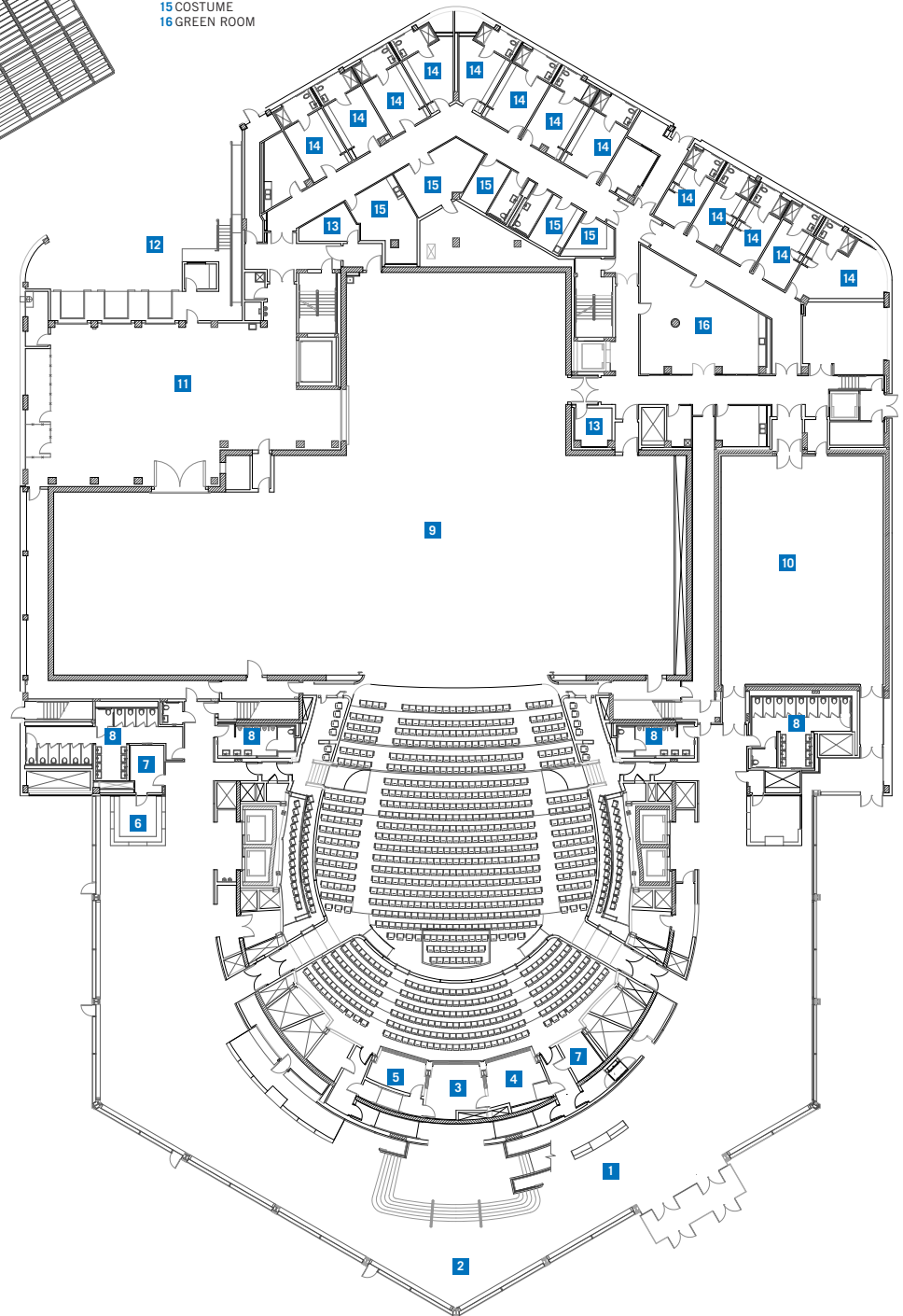
(opposite page) The Winspear's multilevel lobby provides spacious areas for mingling before and after performances.

(this page, counter clockwise from top) The traditional horseshoe configuration of the Margaret McDermott Performance Hall places patrons in close proximity to the stage without sightline obstructions. Argentine artist Guillermo Kuitca collaborated with the architects to design the stage curtain, an abstraction of the hall's seating. The chandelier's fiber-optic rods extend from the elliptical ceiling in between performances, then retract to appear as celestial points of light.



CANOPY LEVEL
 1 REAR DRUM ROOF
 2 OPEN TO MAIN STAGE BELOW
 3 OUTER ROOF

ORCHESTRA LEVEL
 1 RECEPTION
 2 LOBBY
 3 SOUND
 4 LIGHTING
 5 STAGE MANAGER
 6 BOX OFFICE
 7 OFFICE
 8 RESTROOM
 9 MAIN STAGE
 10 RECITAL HALL
 11 SCENE DOCK
 12 TRUCK DOCK
 13 QUICK CHANGE
 14 DRESSING ROOM
 15 COSTUME
 16 GREEN ROOM



The view to the west shows the Winspear in the foreground. Directly behind is the Meyerson Symphony Center, the Nasher Sculpture Center, and the Dallas Museum of Art at the terminus of Flora Street.

RESOURCES **CONCRETE MATERIALS:** Southern Star Concrete; **STONE:** Cold Spring Granite, Sigma Marble and Granite; **METAL MATERIALS:** W&W Steel; **ARCHITECTURAL METAL WORK:** A. Zahner Company; **ORNAMENTAL GLASS RAILINGS:** Vision Products; **WATERPROOFING:** Carlisle, Grace; **BUILDING INSULATION:** Owens Corning; **MODIFIED BITUMINOUS MEMBRANE ROOFING:** Soprema (Anchor Roofing Systems); **ANODIZED ALUMINUM FASCIA AND SOFFIT PANELS:** A. Zahner Company; **ROOF PAVERS:** Anchor Roofing Systems; **RED GLASS:** Vision Products, Haley-Greer; **RED GLASS FRAMING:** Pohl; **METAL DOOR AND HARDWARE:** Ceco (Dallas Door & Supply); **WOOD DOORS:** VT Industries (Dallas Door & Supply); **OVERHEAD DOORS:** Cookson (ABC Doors of Dallas); **ACCESS DOORS AND PANELS:** Milcor (Dallas Door & Supply); **ENTRANCES:** Kawneer, Guardian; **SKYLIGHTS:** Viracon (Super Sky Products); **GLAZED FACADES:** Seele; **ACOUSTIC DOOR ASSEMBLIES:** Industrial Acoustics Co.; **SOUND RETARDANT WINDOWS:** St. Cloud Windows; **GLAZED ENTRANCE CANOPY:** Guardian (Vision Products); **GYPSUM BOARD:** GP; **STEEL GYPSUM FRAMING:** Dietrich; **ACOUSTICAL CEILINGS:** Armstrong; **WOOD FLOORING, STAIRS:** Woodwright Company; **MILLWORK:** Anton; **LAMINATE FLOORING:** Nora Rubber Flooring (Wilson Office Interiors); **STRETCHED WALL FABRIC PANELS:** Quiltcraft Industries; **PAINT:** Sherwin-Williams; **PLASTER:** USG; **GLASS FIBER REINFORCED GYPSUM:** Formglas; **CARPET:** Brintons, Mannington (Wilson Office Interiors); **STRETCHED FABRIC CEILING PANELS:** Kvadrat Soft Cell; **GOLD LEAF:** Conrad Schmitt Studios; **METAL WALL SYSTEMS:** Gordon (Designed Performance Associates); **SIGNAGE:** Environmental Signage Solutions dba ASI Signage Irving; **EXTERIOR SUN SHADE CANOPY:** A. Zahner Company; **FOOD SERVICE EQUIPMENT:** R.W. Smith & Co.; **AUDITORIUM CHANDELIER, PERFORMANCE EQUIPMENT, RIGGING, ADJUSTABLE ACOUSTIC DRAPERY:** J.R. Clancy; **PERFORMANCE LIFTS AND WAGONS:** SECOA; **PERFORMANCE SOUND, VIDEO AND COMMUNICATIONS:** Clair Brothers Audio Systems; **SHADES:** MechoShade; **SECURITY SYSTEM:** MCS System

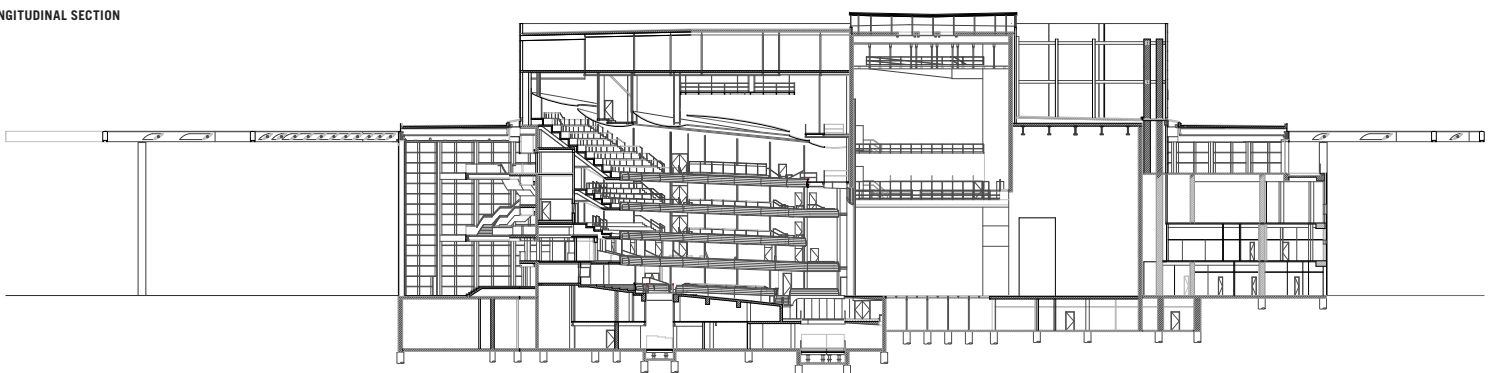


optic rods that penetrate the space between performances and when retracted simulates a field of stars in the night sky.

The acoustics of Winspear's hall can be "tuned" specifically for the type of performance, whether it's an opera, a Broadway show, or a rock concert. For instance, preparations might include activating concealed curtains that are mechanically positioned along the interior walls to "deaden" the hall when amplified music is on the bill. Such technical innovations allowed the hall to be designed first for opera, a stated intent of lead donor Bill Winspear, who, with his wife, Margot, was a long-time patron. Beyond opera, the hall can then be optimally adjusted for other kinds of musical performance as opposed to the more common pattern of creating a multi-purposed hall that really doesn't work well for any type of performance. As with the Meyerson for symphonic music and now the Wyly for theater, the Winspear is a premier venue for opera. Its long-anticipated realization follows a consistent pattern of commitment within the Dallas Arts District to create the best dedicated facilities possible for live performances.

Michael Malone, AIA, directs the Michael Malone Studio at WKMC Architects in Dallas.

LONGITUDINAL SECTION



Second Act

by LAWRENCE CONNOLLY, AIA



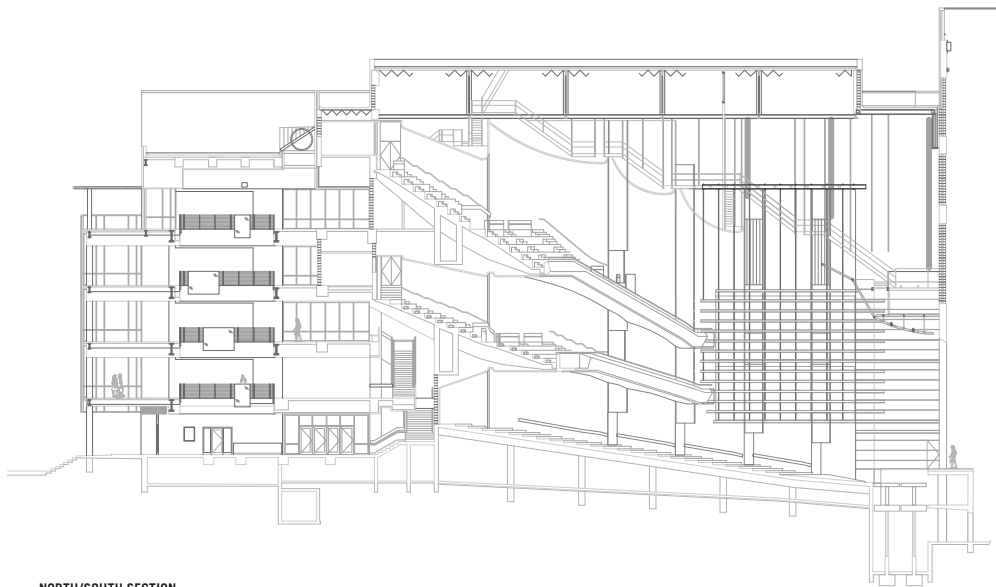


PROJECT Bass Concert Hall Renovation and Expansion, Austin
CLIENT The University of Texas
ARCHITECT Boora Architects with Coffee Crier Schenck & Hammond
DESIGN TEAM Tom Pene, AIA; Stan Boles, FAIA; Amy Donohue, AIA; Bill Schenk, AIA; Ric Battaglia, AIA; Beverly Moss
CONTRACTOR Silverton Construction
CONSULTANTS Frank Lam & Associates (structural); JaffeHolden (audio, acoustical); Auerbach Pollock Friedlander (theater); Schirmer Engineering (fire, life safety); Talex (MEP); Accessology (ADA); DAVCAR (civil); Baer Engineering & Environmental (environmental); Apex Cost Consultants (cost); Post & Grossbard (food service)
PHOTOGRAPHERS Park Street; Len Allington

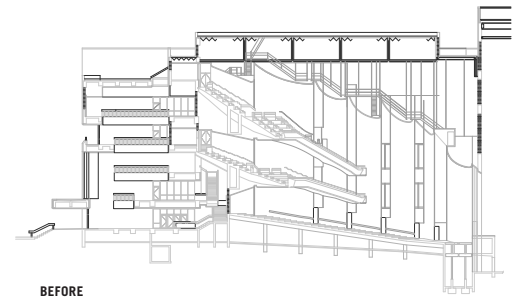
The 3,000-seat Nancy Lee and Perry R. Bass Concert Hall is the flagship theater of the University of Texas at Austin's performing arts complex. Originally opened in 1981, the hall boasted an unusually large stage and generous back-of-house areas that effectively accommodated large-scale opera and dance productions. However, following the adoption in 1999 of more stringent campus-wide fire and life safety standards, the university hired Boora Architects of Portland, Oregon, to study remedial options. The architects, teamed with Coffee Crier Schenck & Hammond Architects of Austin, concluded that a new sprinkler system was needed along with architectural changes to provide the required safe egress routes. Further improvements included a new smoke evacuation system and updates to the restrooms to meet state accessibility standards and provide female gender parity. This piecemeal work was estimated to take at least a year to complete and would require the facility to be closed.

Faced with the prospect of losing Bass for several seasons, university officials saw the opportunity to upgrade other deficiencies—less critical perhaps to the safety issues but nonetheless significant to providing a more enjoyable experience for patrons and performers alike. According to Texas Performing Arts Technical Director Scott Bussey, the concert hall functioned marginally for Broadway productions and other amplified performances due to its fixed lighting and worn-out sound system. In addition to those technical deficiencies, the Bass was burdened with a lobby that was dark and so small that there was no room for seating. Ultimately, the architects were directed to completely redesign the lobby and the audience chamber. With that broadened scope for the project, the designers were able to replace the nondescript and un-inviting entry with a new front facade. As re-imagined by Boora, Bass Concert Hall finally would be identified as the UT campus' grandest venue for cultural events.

The original Bass Concert Hall, designed by Fisher and Spillman Architects of Dallas, was among a series of heavy-handed buildings designed prior to the adoption of architectural guidelines for the campus. For several decades, without guidelines prescribing an acceptable range of stylistic vocabulary and materials, what prevailed on campus was the trend of the day. And in the late 1970s and early 1980s, Brutalism called for flat roofs, muddy-colored brick, and slit windows. That era's monoliths were erected along the north and east edges of the original 40-acre campus, one of those being Bass Hall built across the street from Memorial Stadium. However, Cesar Pelli's campus master plan of 1999 ended the unwelcome trend with a mandated return to the characteristics of the original Mediterranean-



NORTH/SOUTH SECTION



BEFORE



RESOURCES UNIT PAVERS: Wausau Tile; MASONRY UNITS: Acme; GLAZED CURTAIN WALL: Vistawall; TILE: Pental Granite & Marble; CARPET: Lees Carpet; DRAPERY AND CURTAIN HARDWARE: Texas Scenic; RESTAURANT AND BAR FURNITURE, BOOTHS AND TABLES: Lounge22

The steel and glass addition expanded the existing five-level lobby by half its volume, to a total of 30,000 sq. ft.



inspired clay tile roof buildings by Paul Cret, Cass Gilbert, and Hebert Greene.

In the makeover of Bass Concert Hall, the most obvious physical change involved improving the concert experience for patrons outside the hall. The front facade's brick wall was removed to allow an expansion of one structural bay and the addition of a four-story, hopscotch-pattern, fritted-glass bay window wall. The new south-facing transparent entrance increased the visibility of the facility from the exterior, providing a welcome wayfinding beacon to theater-goers walking from the nearby parking garage. The reconfiguration also added a south-facing fourth-floor terrace with a spectacular panoramic view of the campus, the State Capitol, and the downtown skyline.

To meet the needs of a wider range of productions, the proscenium ceiling and sides were opened up to allow the installation of a more flexible lighting system. Acoustically, for live performances the hall benefited from this envelope alteration, as well as from the addition of adjustable curtains that can be drawn along the side walls. Concluding with the replacement of the out-dated sound system, the project yielded a profound overall improvement to the hall as a venue for both live and amplified performances.

All of this additional work increased construction time by six months and grew the budget to \$15 million, but Bussey says the result was worth the longer wait and the extra expense. "Had the project just concentrated on the fire and life safety remedies," he adds, "the place would have been worse."

The Bass Concert Hall's transformation illustrates the dramatic change in UT's built environment before and after the adoption of campus design criteria. Taking to heart the intent of the Pelli master plan, the university has undertaken major renovations and additions that have recast infamous campus behemoths such as the Humanities Research Center (featured in *Texas Architect* March/April 2004). To date, Bass Concert Hall represents the most prominent example of a more thoughtful approach to designing UT facilities that enhances the entire campus and heightens the institution's prestige.

Lawrence Connolly, AIA, is a *TA* contributing editor and principal of Connolly Architects in Austin.



(previous spread) The makeover included much-needed seating for patrons at each level, previously unavailable due to space constrictions.

(top and bottom) The newly brightened and art-filled atrium includes new concession counters and a café for patrons to enjoy a pre-performance meal. Though its capacity was not expanded, upgrades to the 3,000-seat audience chamber range from new seating and flooring finishes to increased lighting and an opened ceiling with adjustable acoustic curtains.

Jazz at the Pavilion

by W.O. NEUHAUS, III, FAIA





PROJECT Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion, The Woodlands
CLIENT The Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion
ARCHITECT RdlR Architects
DESIGN TEAM Rey de la Reza, FAIA; Howard Merrill, AIA; Justin Winchester, AIA; Eduardo Marquez
CONTRACTOR Fretz Construction Company
CLIENT CONSULTANT Horst Berger (tensile fabric roof designer)
CONSULTANTS Walter P Moore (structural); De Nardis Engineering (tensile fabric structural engineer); Vogt Engineering (civil)
PHOTOGRAPHERS Jeff Young; Ted Washington

On Sept. 13, 2008, Hurricane Ike ripped through The Woodlands. High winds knocked down thousands of trees and power lines and devastated the iconic Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion, destroying Horst Berger's beautiful 20-year-old tensile fabric canopy. As the membrane shredded and tension in the structure released, the foundation of the steel truss and pylons shifted. The venue was wrecked and the remainder of the 2008 performance season was cancelled.

The pavilion — the vision of George P. Mitchell and his late wife, Cynthia Woods Mitchell (see news story on p. 15) — had served as the site of 75 events each year since opening in April 1990. To accommodate increased demand, seating had been expanded several times but the 30,000-sf roof had remained untouched; that is, until just last year when the project was completely rebuilt on the same Ike-ravaged site, but this time with more than double the original roof area.

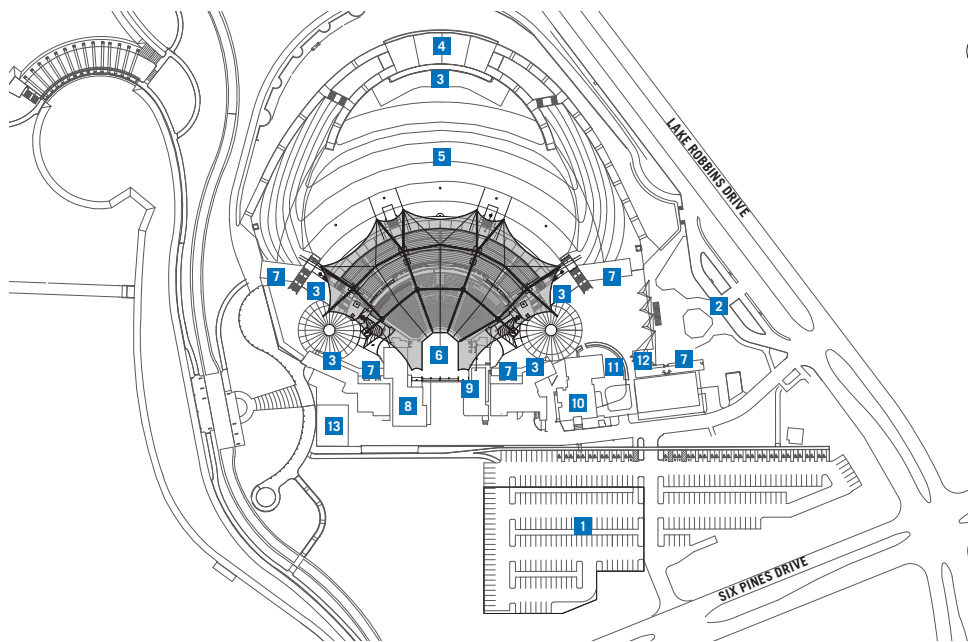
Another vision of Mitchell's was The Woodlands, a planned community located 28 miles north of Houston that pioneered many development strategies now considered aspects of "smart growth." The Woodlands was established in 1974 as part of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's New Communities program. Mitchell selected as its lead planner Ian L. McHarg. The author of *Design With Nature*, McHarg was extremely influential through his writing on environmental impact assessments, new community design, river corridor planning, as well as sustainability concepts and regenerative design. In addition to focusing on the preservation of the existing pine forest, the development scheme embraced water quality and storm runoff issues. The site is prone to flooding, and management of the waterways became a key organizing feature that continues today.

In 1990 when the original Mitchell Pavilion was completed, footpaths meandering through the piney woods connected nearby neighborhoods to the arts facility. From the beginning, the pavilion was hugely popular, partly due to its siting in the forest and partly due to the programming of the performances. Architecturally, it was a hit because of the tensile structure and translucent fabric roof.

As with McHarg, Mitchell and his team sought out the best designer for this type of structure, and Horst Berger once again demonstrated his unique vision. (Berger's roof design for SOM's Haj Terminal of the Jeddah International Airport — at 430,000 square meters, the largest fabric roof in the world — was instrumental in that project being selected for the 2010 AIA's Twenty-five Year award.)

In early September 2008, Mitchell contacted Berger to discuss an expansion of the roof area, recognizing that the pavilion had become an even more important landmark in The Woodlands as the community — now with almost 90,000 residents — continued to grow and develop its urban fabric. Berger, although retired, saw an opportunity to complete his original vision—an 80,000-sf structure.

Then Ike arrived and left behind a chaotic environment of snapped trees and downed power lines. While the region slowly recovered, a team was selected to rebuild the pavilion. The charge



SITE PLAN

- 1 TOWN CENTER GARAGE
- 2 DROP-OFF
- 3 CONCESSIONS
- 4 LAWN ENTRY PLAZA
- 5 LAWN SEATING
- 6 STAGE
- 7 CONCESSIONS
- 8 PERFORMERS' BUILDING
- 9 PRODUCTION
- 10 ADMINISTRATION
- 11 PATIO
- 12 TICKET OFFICE
- 13 MAINTENANCE

RESOURCES METAL CANOPIES: AVADEK; STEEL DETAILER: LVJ Specialty;
STRUCTURAL STEEL ERECTION: Postel Erection Group; LUMBER: Deer Park
Lumber; WATERPROOFING: Tremco, WR Meadows, Sika (TDC Waterproof-
ing); METAL ROOFING: AVADEK; TESTING LAB: Geotech Engineering and
Testing; ELECTRICAL DESIGN: Lakey Electric Co.; PLUMBING DESIGN: Raven
Mechanical; SEATING: American Seating; FABRIC PATTERNING & INSTALLA-
TION: FabriTec Structures; WIND TUNNEL CONSULTANT: RWDI



(counterclockwise from below) Tattered fabric belied the structural damage to the facility. The reconstituted venue reopened seven months later, in time for the springtime concert season. Construction crews installed 80,000 sq. ft. of tensile fabric in the days before the reopening.

2008

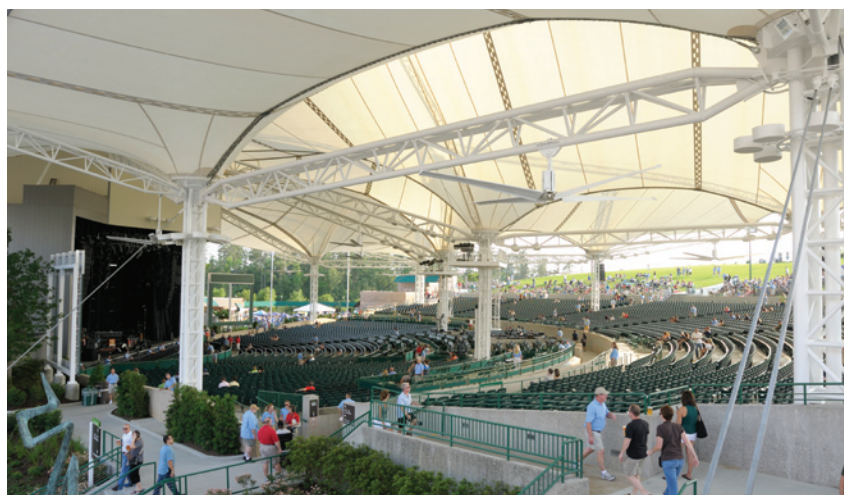


was simple: open by May 1, 2009—230 days from Ike's departure. Horst Berger was on board, along with Fretz Construction Company, but the rest of the sextet had to be assembled. Joining the group was RdlR Architects to redesign and expand the seating areas and coordinate where the structure touched the ground; Walter P. Moore Engineers was responsible for the steel support frame; DeNardis Engineering, who, with Berger, was responsible for sculpting the fabric envelope; and Rowan Williams Davies & Irwin, providing civil engineering support. In a supporting role was FabriTec Structures, the fabric roof manufacturer, who due to the aggressive schedule had to be involved from day one. In early November the ensemble assembled on site with the owner (the Center for the Performing Arts at The Woodlands). With 184 days remaining, the task looked impossible on paper; and it would have been under any normal linear design and construction process. Each member of the sextet had a part to play and they had to start playing immediately, without sheet music. This was improvisation, reaction, opportunity—in short, it was jazz.

As foundations were rebuilt, steel salvaged, and fixed seats renovated, the architects and engineers dealt with the evolution of codes and new wind-load standards to work out the geometry of the new roof. Based on Berger's model, fabric was ordered for an 80,000-sf canopy. On Dec. 1, seven-day work weeks started. By mid-December, with the tower crane erected, crews were working around the clock. At the end of February, 13 lifts were erecting 75 tons of steel structure. The fabric roof was installed five days before opening day to allow completion of the expanded seating, installation of the sound system, and final touches to the grounds.

The expanded amphitheater opened in May 2009 with improved acoustics and a new sense of intimacy. The covered seating was increased from 2,479 to 6,387 with a total capacity of 16,000 within the fence. Even though the expanded design was, in Berger's words, "frozen by what had already been done," there is a new sense of importance in the entry sequence, which will be further enhanced by a troika of new entry pavilions that Berger is currently designing.

W.O. Neuhaus, III, FAIA, is a principal with Studio Red Architects in Houston.



(preceding spread) After being wrecked by Hurricane Ike, the pavilion was rebuilt with an expanded fabric canopy and additional seating.

(this page, top and bottom) The project provided an opportunity to improve acoustics and enhance the audience's sense of intimacy with the performers on stage. Enlarged from 30,000 sq. ft. to 80,000 sq. ft., the canopy now shelters 6,387 seats (formerly 2,479).

Reprise of a Classic

by ANNA MOD





PROJECT Sengelmann Hall, Schulenburg

CLIENT Dana Harper

ARCHITECT Stern and Bucek Architects

DESIGN TEAM David Bucek, AIA; Jesse Cheng; Sharon Chapman; Henry Kwon; William Stern, FAIA

CONTRACTOR Kalina, Inc.

CONSULTANTS Sparks Engineering (structural); Frank Briscoe/Architectural Conservation (architectural conservator); Source (analysis of historic finishes); Texas Dance Hall Preservation (dance hall)

PHOTOGRAPHER Hester + Hardaway

Schulenburg, situated about 100 miles west of Houston along Interstate 10, was founded in 1873 after Louis Schulenburg donated land surrounding the planned Galveston, Harrisburg and San Antonio Railway. Typical of late-nineteenth-century railroad towns, Schulenburg developed a wide commercial street lined with several blocks of one- and two-story masonry buildings facing the tracks. Architecturally, the downtown is still intact today although only a few businesses remain open due to the routine exodus for the nearby highway.

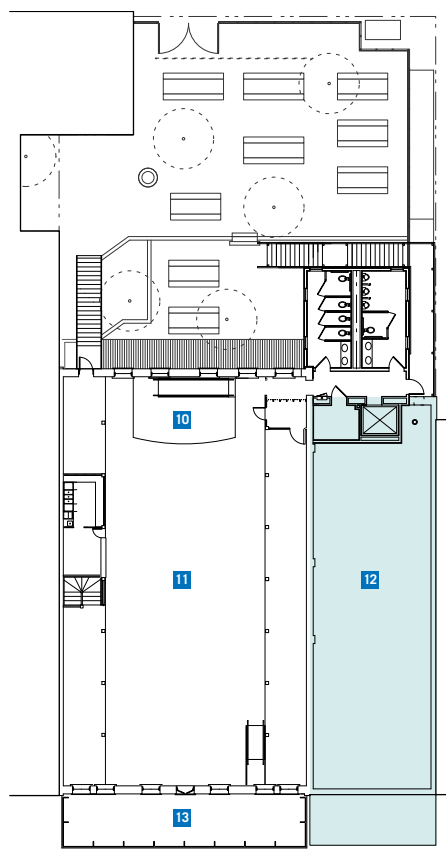
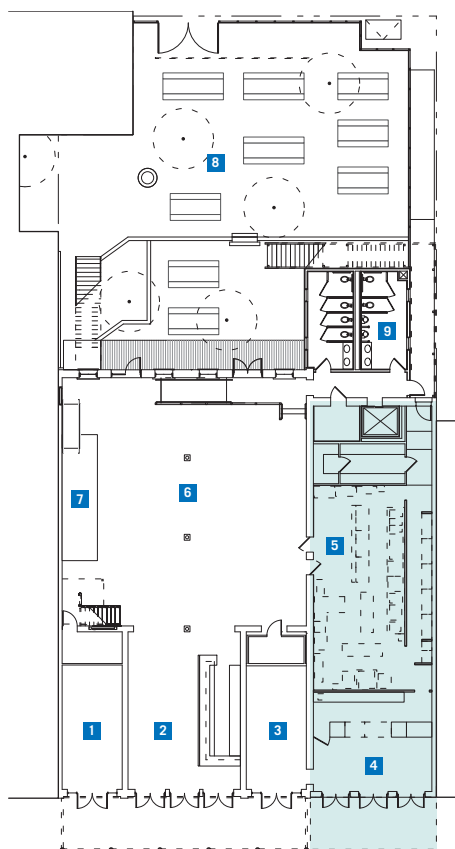
The pavilion Sengelmann Hall, a two-story Romanesque Revival-style masonry structure built in 1894, originally contained an upstairs dance hall operated by brothers Augustus and Charles Sengelmann, which history shows to have once been a vibrant part of the town's social scene. However, in the 1940s, the dancing stopped and the downstairs eventually became a Western Auto store and the upstairs was used for storage.

Even today, Sengelmann Hall stands as an unusual example of a Texas dance hall, a building type more closely identified with one-story, wood-framed structures typically built in rural parts of Central Texas by Czech and German immigrants for social events and civic activities. Featuring gabled and octagonal rooflines, scores of these vernacular buildings are still in use after more than a century. Fayette County, where Schulenburg is located, has many such places that are frequent settings for festivals, dances, and weddings.

In the 1990s, Houstonian Dana Harper purchased Sengelmann Hall and set up his painting studio upstairs. Working there through the ensuing decade, Harper became increasingly intrigued by how little the building had changed over the years. Still intact were the original tin ceilings, the wood dance floor, tall windows, and plaster walls decorated with stenciling. Also conspicuous were several unsympathetic alterations, including the removal of the front balcony and the paired storefront doors.

In 2007, Harper hired Stern and Bucek Architects to plan and supervise a major rehabilitation to bring the building up to modern code (and install air conditioning) while retaining its obvious character-defining features and its more ethereal ambiance. A visit to the renewed Sengelmann Hall is a step back in time.

The building originally had four rooms on the ground floor: a saloon, a barbershop, and a doctor's office in the front, and a restaurant at the rear with an interior fountain that served as an evaporative cooler. The large, open hall upstairs had high ceilings and double-hung sash windows at either end that allowed for light and air circulation. A small bathroom, a bar, and a hat-check booth were also part of the original second-floor scheme. Since women and children were not allowed in drinking establishments in those days, an additional stair was located in an adjacent two-story building to



- FIRST FLOOR PLAN**
- BAKERY
 - 1 OFFICE
 - 2 SALOON
 - 3 GIFT SHOP
 - 4 CZECK BAKERY
 - 5 KITCHEN
 - 6 RESTAURANT
 - 7 STAGE
 - 8 BEIRGARTEN
 - 9 TOWER ADDITION

- SECOND FLOOR PLAN**
- 10 STAGE
 - 11 DANCE HALL
 - 12 EXISTING ROOF
 - 13 BALCONY



RESOURCES FOOD SERVICE EQUIPMENT: Whole Sale Restaurant Supply;
ELEVATOR: Schindler Elevator

The new owner reintroduced the outdoor biergarten at the back of the building, a move that enhances the historical quality of the late-nineteenth-century business district.



the west, which provided access without having to pass through the downstairs saloon. Behind the building was an outdoor biergarten.

The project benefited from the federal investment tax credit (ITC) program available for buildings listed on the National Register of Historic Places that are rehabilitated in compliance with standards set by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior. While straightforward on paper, successful participation in the ITC incentive program necessitates a creative architect who understands how to protect historic elements while solving complex design problems. Paramount to the federal standards is the overall sense of being inside a historic building where modern upgrades fade into the woodwork.

The architect's solution to the most significant design challenge was Harper's purchase of the building next door to the east (the City Meat Market) for a commercial kitchen and an elevator. Also, a new gabled addition with an egress stair and restroom is discretely tucked onto the rear of that adjacent building. The front room of the old market now serves as a bakery and a lounge for performers. This strategy preserved the open volumes of the downstairs saloon as well as the 1894 footprint of the upstairs dance hall (along with its original wooden flooring). Historic finishes—stenciling on the plaster, paint on the tin ceilings, and shellac on the wainscoting—were analyzed and those deemed to be in good condition were maintained and cleaned. Replacement pieces, or patches, to the floor were inserted where needed. New elements, such as an extension of the old wainscoting, were matched to the historic striped-shellac color scheme (yet discernable to the trained eye from the original because of the absence of patina and the slightly different cut of the newly milled lumber). Archival photos assisted craftsmen in replicating the elaborately carved wooden bar, paired wooden storefront doors, and wide balcony. In addition, the biergarten was reintroduced at the rear.

Reopened in 2009, Sengelmann Hall features a restaurant and bakery downstairs and an upstairs hall with live music on weekends (including polka on Sunday afternoons) where people of all ages gather to dance across the original floorboards as they have for generations.

Anna Mod is a historic preservation specialist with SWCA Environmental Consultants in Houston.



(preceding spread) The renovation of Sengelmann Hall has revived Schulenburg's downtown, attracting visitors from Houston and Austin with live music performances every weekend.

(top and below) Used as storage for decades after the hall's heyday, the upper level once again is the setting for dancing. Downstairs in the saloon and restaurant (seen in the background through the arches), the architects minimized their interventions to leave most of the original elements exposed to view.

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THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE
OF ARCHITECTS

Temple Emanuel



PROJECT Temple Emanuel, McAllen

CLIENT Temple Emanuel

ARCHITECT Boultinghouse Simpson Architects

DESIGN TEAM Daniel Boultinghouse, AIA; Ray Urdaz, Assoc. AIA; George Quintanilla; J.R. Guerra

CONTRACTOR D. Wilson Construction

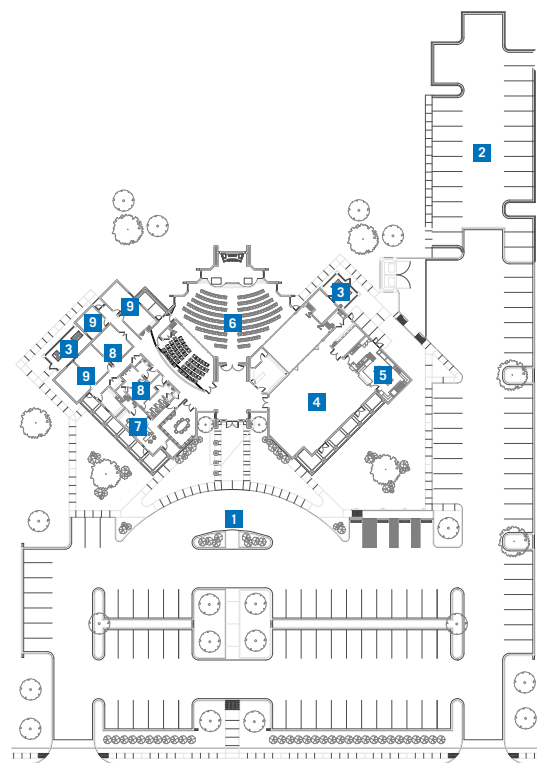
CONSULTANTS Donald Dragutski Consulting Engineer (structural); CRC Engineering (MEP); Spoor Engineering (civil)

PHOTOGRAPHER Coles Hairston Photography

RESOURCES METAL MATERIALS: Southern Steel Fabricators; METAL STUDS: Dietrich; ARCHITECTURAL WOODWORK: AAE Manufacturing; LAMINATES: Wilsonart; CHERRY WOOD PANELING: G.L. Veneer Co.; WATERPROOFING: W.R. Meadows, STS Coatings; BUILDING INSULATION: CertainTeed; ROOF AND DECK INSULATION: Firestone Building Products, Atlas Roofing; VAPOR RETARDERS: Tyvek; METAL ROOFING: MBCI (Southern Steel Fabricators); METAL DOORS: Ceco (H&H Overhead Door); ENTRANCES: Vistawall (G&S Glass); GLASS: PPG (G&S Glass); STAINED GLASS: Ascalon Studios; DOOR HARDWARE: REFCO; GYPSUM: USG, GP; TILE: Mohawk Tile; ACOUSTICAL CEILINGS: Armstrong; PAINT: Sherwin-Williams; CARPET: Patcraft Designweave; OPERABLE PARTITIONS: Hufcor (DEA Specialties); FIRE EXTINGUISHERS & CABINETS: JL Industries (DEA Specialties); TOILET PARTITIONS: Scranton (DEA Specialties); ECCLESIASTICAL EQUIPMENT: Ascalon Studios; FOOD SERVICE EQUIPMENT: Best Restaurant Supply; MANUFACTURED CASEWORK: AAE Manufacturing; ARK AND PODIUMS: Ascalon Studios; AUDITORIUM SEATING: Sauder Worship Seating; LIGHTING: Peerless Lighting (Spectrum Lighting)

The new Temple Emanuel is the most recent addition to McAllen's growing Jewish community. When the first Temple Emanuel was constructed on a nearby site in 1948, the congregation consisted of 28 families. The congregation has since expanded to 160 members, with hopes for even greater numbers in the future. To accommodate that growth, the congregation turned to Boultinghouse Simpson Architects to design a new temple, one that would fit in contextually with its surroundings. The design objective was a building that was contemporary yet includes elements that recall historical precedents of the faith. The architects responded by employing traditional archways and a veneer made of simulated Jerusalem stone, the material that comprises the Jewish holy site, the Western Wall in the Old City of Jerusalem. Other key requirements included the need for the sanctuary to seat 200 with wide aisles. Also, the architects were asked to plan the four-acre site for future expansion after the 14,900-sf building was constructed. Most important was the orientation of the temple so the ark, which holds the sacred Torah scrolls, would be on the east wall, with the congregation facing toward Jerusalem. The new synagogue, completed in the fall of 2008, represents the future of the congregation in McAllen while bringing together design, function, and religion.

SUSAN BUTLER

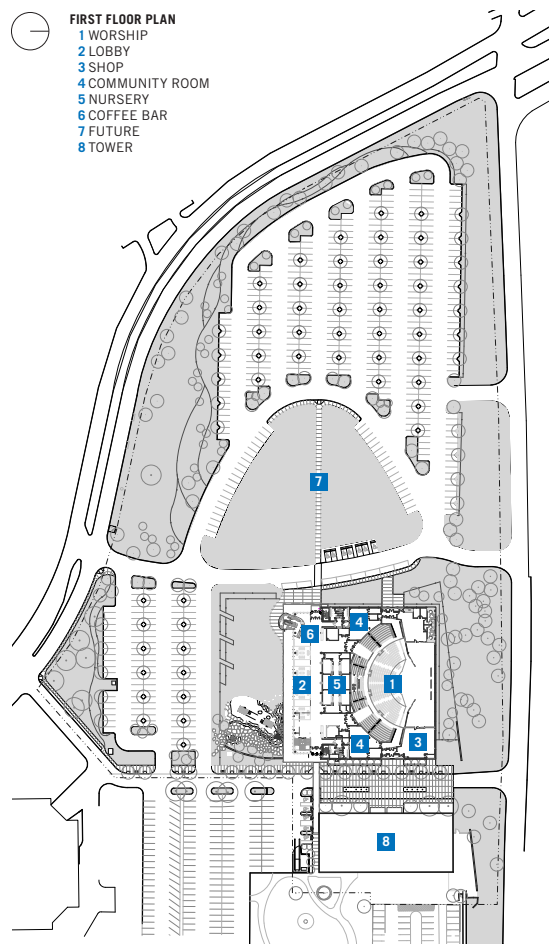


FIRST FLOOR PLAN

- 1 DROP OFF
- 2 FUTURE PARKING
- 3 MECHANICAL YARDS
- 4 SOCIAL HALL
- 5 KITCHEN
- 6 SANCTUARY
- 7 OFFICE
- 8 RESTROOM
- 9 CLASSROOM



Watermark Community Church



PROJECT Watermark Community Church, Dallas

CLIENT Watermark Community Church

ARCHITECT Omniplan

DESIGN TEAM Tipton Housewright, FAIA; Scott Hall, AIA; Jim Patterson, AIA; Juan Ponce; Brian Saldana, AIA; Dale Hogue; Kevin Glasscock, AIA

CONTRACTOR Rogers O'Brien

CONSULTANTS L.A. Fuess Partners (structural); Blum Consulting Engineers (MEP); Talley Associates (landscape); Acoustic Dimensions (acoustic); Pacheco Koch Consulting Engineers (civil); Scott Oldner Design (lighting); Dana Foley Design (furnishings); Omniplan (environmental graphics); Inspec (specification); MB Parker & Co. (food service)

PHOTOGRAPHER Peter Calvin

RESOURCES CONCRETE PAVEMENT: Southern Star Concrete; FOUNTAINS: Robertson Commercial Pools; FENCES AND GATES: Kee Klamp; CEMENTIOUS DECKS: Tectum; BURNISHED BLOCK: Featherlite, Acme; METAL MATERIALS: Bratton Steel; LAMINATED WOOD BEAMS: Unit Structures; ARCHITECTURAL WOODWORK: Williams + Clark; BUILDING INSULATION: Johns Manville; ROOF DECK INSULATION: Owens Corning; ROOF AND WALL PANELS, FASCIA AND SOFFIT PANELS: Petersen Aluminum; GLASS: PPG (Oak Cliff Mirror & Glass); GLAZED CURTAIN WALL: Texas Wall Systems (Oak Cliff Mirror & Glass); GYPSUM BOARD FRAMING: ClarkWestern Building Systems; TILE: DalTile; ACOUSTICAL CEILINGS: USG; SPECIAL CEILING SURFACES: Tectum; PAINTS: Benjamin Moore, Sherwin-Williams; SHADES: MechoShade; FANS: Big Ass Fans

In the fall of 2007, Watermark Community Church in Dallas completed phase two of a three-phase project that created an 11.5-acre campus master-planned and designed by Omniplan. First came the renovation of an eight-story office building to provide facilities for the church's growing congregation, including spaces for adult education and children's classes. The second phase, construction of an interim 2,100-seat worship space with a community gathering area, responded to Watermark's rapidly growing Sunday services that overflowed temporary arrangements in a local high school's auditorium. The final phase will include construction of a 250,000-sf complex comprising a 3,500-seat auditorium for worship, a 500-seat multi-purpose room, a 350-seat chapel, and a children's education building. The centerpiece of the campus is a baptismal pond set within the lawn of an expansive courtyard, which visually conveys the idea that Watermark's congregation represents a large community. The courtyard, adjacent to the worship building's "front porch," provides an outdoor space suitable for small gatherings and large events. The architects' master plan set aside another large tract within the campus for the construction of future facilities.

SUSAN BUTLER



PROJECT St. Stephen Deacon + Martyr Sanctuary, El Paso

CLIENT Catholic Diocese of El Paso

ARCHITECT Alvidrez Architecture

DESIGN TEAM David Alvidrez, AIA; Jose Luis Lopez; Priscilla Velez; Enrique Spencer

CONTRACTOR Lloyd Hamilton Construction

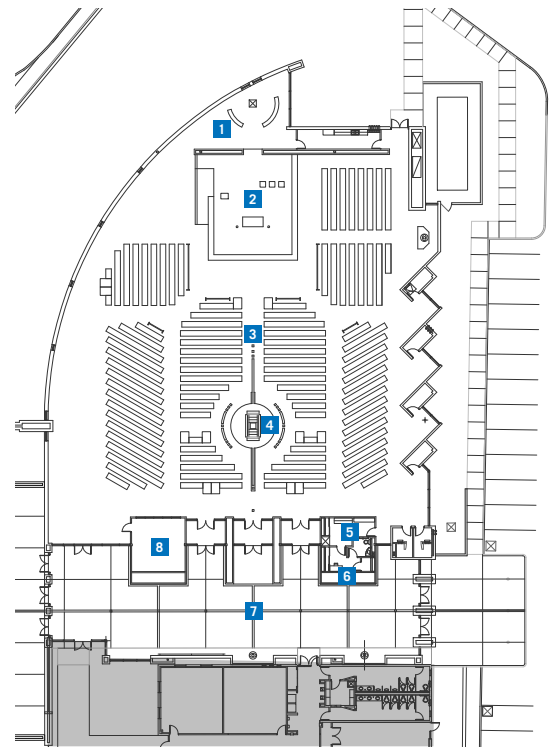
CONSULTANTS Quantum Engineering Consultants (civil); Henry K. Ng and Associates (structural); Fluid Systems (mechanical); Gonzalo Aguilar Professional Engineer (electrical); Desert Elements (landscape); AMEC Earth and Environmental (geotechnical); Scott Biggs Professional Estimating & Consulting (estimator); Julie Ericson Gereda (accessibility)

PHOTOGRAPHER Fred Golden Photography

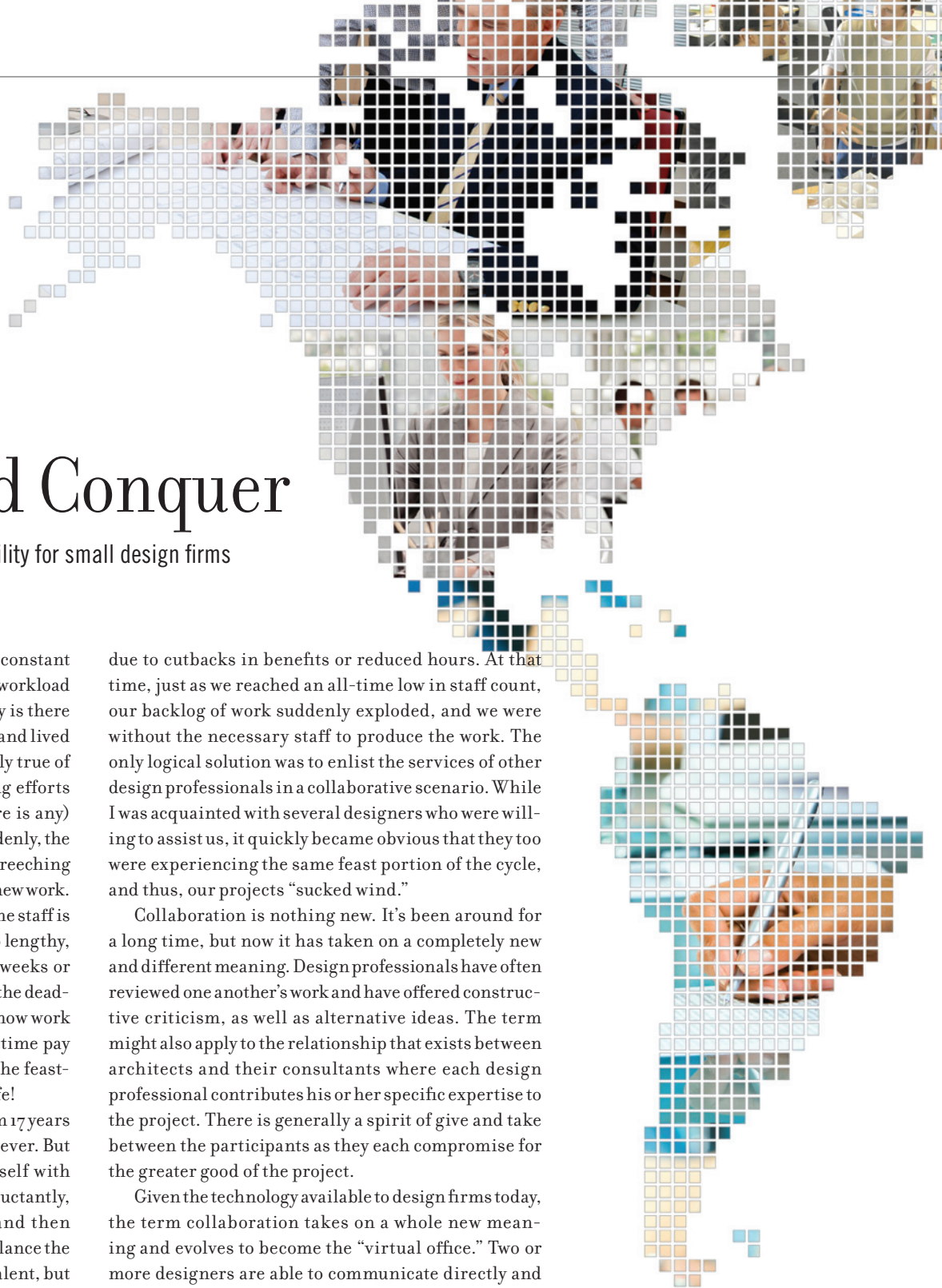
RESOURCES CONCRETE PAVEMENT AND MATERIALS: Mullen Telles; MASONRY UNITS: Del Norte Masonry Products; METAL MATERIALS: CMC Commercial Materials; METAL DECKING: Metal Dek Group; STRUCTURAL STEEL, CONCRETE REINFORCING STEEL: Structural Steel Services; RAILINGS AND HANDRAILS: Garcia's Welding; METAL STUDS: Dietrich Metal Framing (Rex Materials); ARCHITECTURAL WOODWORK: Imperial Woodwork; WATERPROOFING: Chemprobe; BUILDING INSULATION: Tripolymer Foam Insulation; MEMBRANE ROOFING: Johns Manville; METAL AND WOOD DOORS: Desert Construction Specialties; ENTRANCES, GLAZED CURTAIN WALL: Architectural Aluminum & Glass; STAINED GLASS ARTIST: Architectural Stained Glass; ACOUSTICAL CEILINGS: Armstrong; PAINT: Sherwin-Williams; SIGNAGE: Best Sign Systems (Garcia's Welding); MANUFACTURED CASEWORK, ECCLESIASTICAL FURNITURE: Imperial Woodworks

Built last year, the St. Stephen Deacon + Martyr Sanctuary of the Catholic Diocese of El Paso represents the final phase of a project designed by Alvidrez Architecture. Comprising a total 42,000 sf on 7.5 acres, the project took 10 years to complete. The 25,745-sf sanctuary, its design inspired by the themes of light and journey, accommodates a capacity of 1,000 people and was completed on a \$3.6m budget. A small courtyard divides the new and older buildings, creating a small gathering space that encourages social interaction among parishioners. The sanctuary's entry has three portals, referencing the Holy Trinity, that lead into the light-filled worship space. Different from traditional double-aisle churches, St. Stephen's pews are set in a semi-stacked pattern facing the altar, a configuration that brings the congregation together in closer fellowship. Placement of the rectilinear baptismal font at the entrance further supports the sense of community, with surrounding seats and water gently cascading down the sides of the basin. Wanting the sanctuary to reflect the community's diversity and communal spirit, church officials commissioned works of art from regional craftsmen. Among them, Ken Grlesemer, a liturgical designer from Albuquerque, assisted on the design of the project, while Jeff Smith of Fort Davis created a wall of stained glass. Also, artist John Nava created nine tapestries of saints that correspond with the ethnic spectrum of the congregation, a clear departure from Euro-centric tradition.

SUSAN BUTLER



- SANCTUARY**
- 1 TABERNACLE
 - 2 ALTAR
 - 3 SANCTUARY
 - 4 BAPTISMAL FONT
 - 5 SACRIST
 - 6 VESTING
 - 7 EXTERIOR NARTHEX
 - 8 CHILDREN'S CHAPEL



Combine and Conquer

Long-distance collaboration offers flexibility for small design firms

by J. MICHAEL LEINBACK, AIA

INSIDE EVERY DESIGN FIRM, there exists a constant struggle to find a balance between the current workload and its staff's capacity to produce work. Rarely is there equilibrium between the two. We've all heard and lived the phrase, "feast or famine". This is especially true of small firms that must often forego marketing efforts while the sole principal and the staff (if there is any) work feverishly to meet a project deadline. Suddenly, the project is finished and everything comes to a screeching halt because no one has had the time to pursue new work. Then the firm's overhead skyrockets because the staff is sitting on its collective hands. If the lull is too lengthy, layoffs may become necessary. After several weeks or months, when a number of projects roll in and the deadlines are compressed, the reduced staff must now work overtime to meet the firm's obligations. Overtime pay once again increases the firm's overhead. So the feast-famine cycle repeats, over and over. What a life!

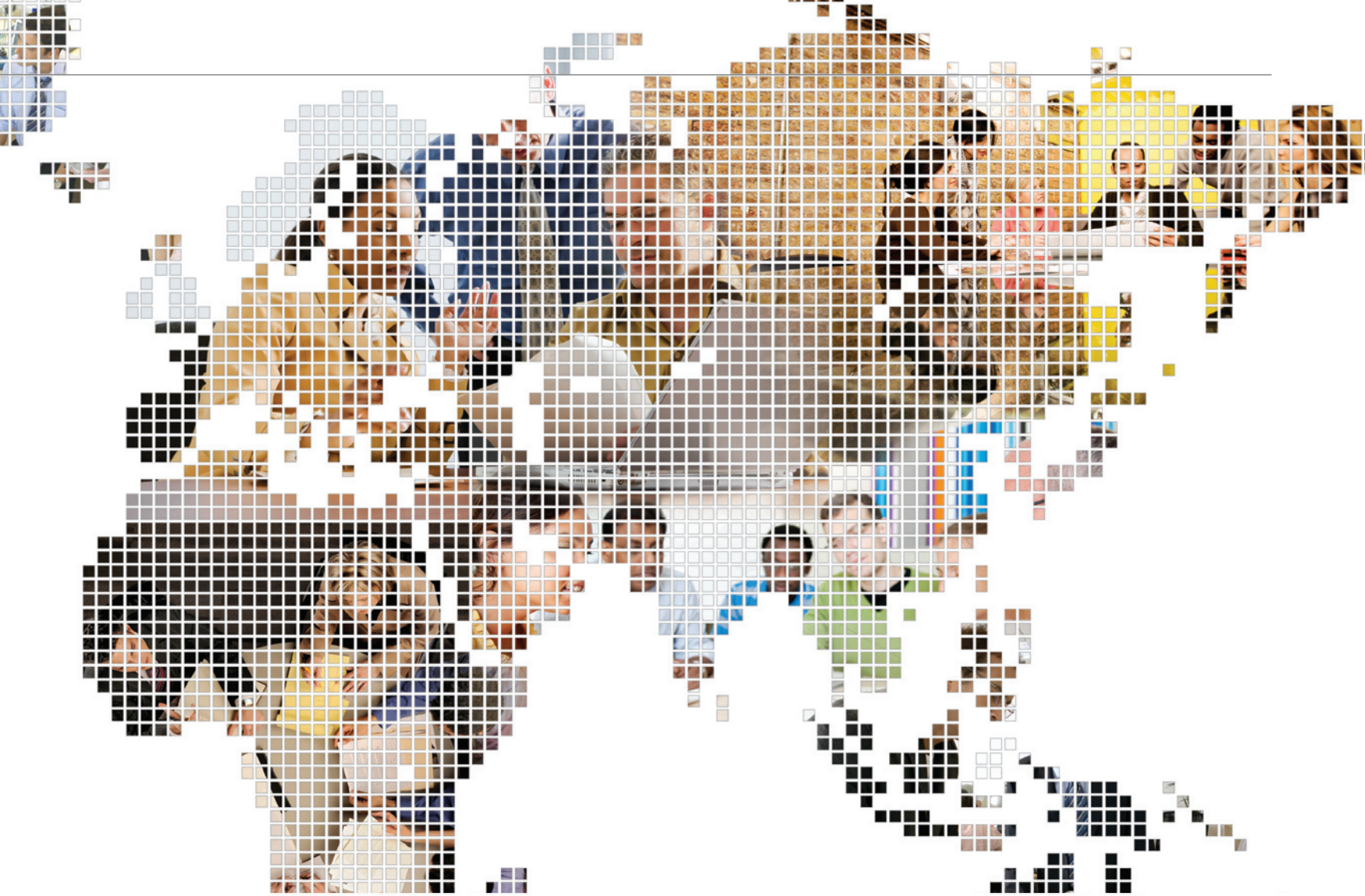
When I founded my small architectural firm 17 years ago, I fully intended to be the only employee—ever. But I was very fortunate and suddenly found myself with more work than I could produce alone. Very reluctantly, I hired one employee, and then another, and then another. For the next 10 years, I struggled to balance the load. I was constantly on the lookout for new talent, but there were few qualified applicants. And even then, only half of my hires actually panned out. About the time that the staff reached 10, we experienced an 18-month period during which we had an almost perfect balance between workload and staff.

The calm was short-lived. Over the next 24 months or so, we experienced the most significant downturn in the firm's 12-year history. During that time, we lost several key employees—some left out of fear of the future, others were laid off, and still others resigned

due to cutbacks in benefits or reduced hours. At that time, just as we reached an all-time low in staff count, our backlog of work suddenly exploded, and we were without the necessary staff to produce the work. The only logical solution was to enlist the services of other design professionals in a collaborative scenario. While I was acquainted with several designers who were willing to assist us, it quickly became obvious that they too were experiencing the same feast portion of the cycle, and thus, our projects "sucked wind."

Collaboration is nothing new. It's been around for a long time, but now it has taken on a completely new and different meaning. Design professionals have often reviewed one another's work and have offered constructive criticism, as well as alternative ideas. The term might also apply to the relationship that exists between architects and their consultants where each design professional contributes his or her specific expertise to the project. There is generally a spirit of give and take between the participants as they each compromise for the greater good of the project.

Given the technology available to design firms today, the term collaboration takes on a whole new meaning and evolves to become the "virtual office." Two or more designers are able to communicate directly and immediately by phone while viewing a drawing (or better yet, a 3D model) in real time via online meeting applications. The "lead" design firm can conceivably function as the project manager, perhaps developing the architectural program, while a secondary firm develops the actual design by means of a 3-D model. The model can then be accessed by the lead firm who reviews the design and presents it to the client. Should it become necessary, a third firm can become involved at any point in time as dictated by schedule, expertise, etc.



The idea of the collective architectural practice has been around a while, if only in a very loosely organized manner. Under this scenario, several sole practitioners and small firms would each practice as independent architects to deliver small projects until such time as schedule or the sheer magnitude of a single project dictated a need to seek assistance from some or all of the collaborative. In the old days, with communication being limited to phone calls and overnight delivery services; those collaborations were comprised of designers who practiced in very close geographic proximity to one another, often actually sharing office space, equipment, and perhaps expenses. However, due to their close proximity to one another, those same designers might often be in direct competition with one another for other projects, possibly creating tension within the collaborative.

With high-tech tools such as BIM becoming increasingly available to even small firms, it is perfectly reasonable to assemble a group of firms, individuals, or a combination of the two who may be scattered all over the country, if not the globe.

Not only does this eliminate the issue of competition for a local project (for all but the largest firms), but it allows for an expanded design vision given the varying regional design vocabularies that each architect brings to the table.

Furthermore, the labor pool is expanded to include candidates with no regard for geographical location. While large firms are in a position to recruit talent from across the country, small firms may find it difficult to entice a candidate to move across the country in hopes of developing a working relationship. If they do take a chance, both the firm and the employee must invest substantially in monetary terms. Remote collaboration, on the other hand, allows for a trial period to determine if the two firms or individuals can cement a relationship that might carry beyond a single project. If either party is uncomfortable with the relationship, dissolution of the temporary arrangement is a very simple matter: "Thanks, but, no thanks." If both parties feel that the match is a good one, the relationship can easily continue on a project-by-project basis for an indefinite period.

Not surprisingly, independent collaborators also enjoy a number of benefits in the collaborative environment—value-based compensation, choice of where to live, flexible work schedule, ability to gain experience on various project types, sizes, climates/locales, etc. Even clients, perhaps unknowingly, benefit considerably from the collaborative configuration because schedules can be met regardless of the lead firm's workload, and experts can be matched to specific building types, project scope, and software applications. Clients may also recognize improved designs given the expanded knowledge base that extends beyond local and regional limitations and experience.

Numerous advantages can be recognized for all parties whenever a virtual office configuration is implemented. The concept solves many of the typical problems faced by designers and architects, especially during periods of uncertainty brought on by a tenuous economy.

J. Michael Leinback, AIA, is the principal of JML Architects in Jacksonville. He can be reached at mleinback@jmlarch.com.



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Returning to Brownsville, tour participants examined two twentieth-century sites that display the dramatic achievements of recent preservation in Brownsville. On the 2006 tour, conference participants saw work in progress on the restoration of the George Kraigher House, designed by the Los Angeles-based modern master Richard J. Neutra and built in 1937. The two-year long restoration was completed in 2008 and the Kraigher House is now occupied by the University of Texas at Brownsville/Texas Southmost College's Institute for Public Service.

The group was welcomed again by Lawrence Lof, who manages the university's rehabilitation projects and also serves on the faculty as an assistant professor of biology. Lof described the restoration of the Kraigher House — previously on the verge of collapsing from neglect and decay — as extremely demanding because of its severely deteriorated condition and the caliber of its modern details, which were made with ordinary materials but designed and fabricated with precision and refinement. Even on an overcast day, the Kraigher House was radiant. The small house easily absorbed the busload of visitors, who marveled at Lof's reconstruction from Neutra's original drawings of lost or damaged cabinetwork and other interior and exterior finishes.

The tour's final stop was Cameron County's Oscar C. Dancy Building, built in 1912-13 and designed by San Antonio architect Atlee B. Ayres. Formerly used as the county's courthouse, the Classical Revival structure is located two blocks from Immaculate Conception Cathedral. The courthouse was restored in phases by Roberto J Ruiz Architect between 2000 and 2006 under the auspices of the Texas Historical Commission's Historic Courthouse Preservation Program. Ruiz and Sharon Fleming, AIA, assistant director of the state's courthouse preservation program, spoke about the process in the district courtroom, an imposing, double-height space where the Cameron County Commissioners Court now meets. Ruiz's tour of the courthouse revealed its marble-lined corridors and brilliantly restored rotunda, capped by an art glass skylight and animated with plaster ornament and iron railings that attest to the presence in Ayres's office of George Willis, who before moving to San Antonio spent four years in the studio of Frank Lloyd Wright at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Stephen Fox is a fellow of the Anchorage Foundation of Texas.

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Big Art

Sculptures spur discovery at Hermann Park

by MARK LAM, AIA, PHD

AMONGST ITS MANY FOUNTAINS, GARDENS, AND PLAYGROUNDS, Houston's Hermann Park is playing host to 15 newly installed monumental sculptures that have transformed the grounds into a landscape of exploration. Made possible by the Texan-French Alliance for the Arts, the works by French sculptor Bernar Venet will remain on display until October. (Three Indeterminate Lines is shown at top; the inset shows Random Combination of Indeterminate Lines.)

The sculptures are composed of solid Cor-ten steel bars—some straight, some rolled, others twisted—and placed in eight groupings throughout the park, each expressing a different take on Venet's interest in the mathematics of order versus chaos. The gigantic objects, some standing as tall as 30 feet and weighing up to 12 tons, tease viewers to investigate up close the repeating perfection of industrialized production. The simplicity of these abstract works communicate their power in a fundamental language through material, weight, and scale.



Venet's pieces engage the natural and manmade environs as if they were site-specific. Set against the backdrop of Hermann Park's lush lawns, the pieces remake the greenspace into a vast sculpture garden. Their placement encourages people to discover one at a time, with each grouping visually leading to another and so on. They each frame, complement, and even seem to offer mute commentary on their surroundings.

The groupings present studies of precision-rolled and carefully machined arcs contrasted against twisted scraps with hand-torched ends and spring-like segments unabashedly showing marks left by enormous pliers powerful enough to grip and coil such thick bars. Like wreckage from a colossal train crash strewn about the landscape, the sheer size and weight of each piece will fascinate viewers of all ages, challenging them to ask what are they, where did they come from, and how do they stay upright?

Mark Lam, AIA, PhD, is the managing principal of SHW Group's Houston office.